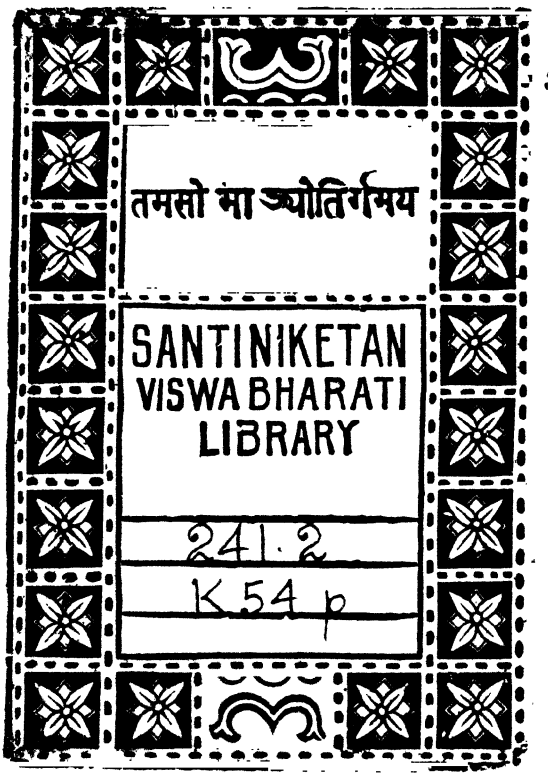

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HARISUNDAR MEMORIAL SERIES.

# BRAHMANANDA KESHAV

## LIFE & WORKS.

Part I....1838—1866.

PREM SUNDAR BASU.

# FOREWORD.



To present the life and works of Keshav Chandra Sen in a handy form is the object of this publication. The "life" is compiled from *The Life and Teachings of Keshub Chunder Sen* by P. C. Mozoomdar, and *Acharya Keshav Chandra* in Bengali by Gour Govind Ray. The "works" comprise not a mere selection of portions from Keshav's speeches and writings, but whole pieces of importance abridged by the omission of amplifications, explications and illustrations, and of historical details. Care has been taken that what was retained gave a continued reading and no gaps were felt. No addition or alteration whatsoever has been made in the text, not even the stops being interfered with.

The plan of the book, it is hoped, will help a proper appreciation of the development of Keshav's ideas and activities.

The second part, which is in preparation, and is expected to be of similar size, will bring this book to a close. An index to the whole book will be added at the end.

*February 1937.* EDITOR.

## WORKS.

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# BRAHMANANDA KESHAV.

Keshav Chandra Sen is the lineal successor of the *Sens of Garifa* who claim descent from the ancient royal dynasty known as the *Sen Rajas* of Bengal, who were Vaidyas—the caste that, immediately next to the traditional supremacy of the Brahmans, is the most influential and intellectual in Bengal.

*Garifa*, Keshav's ancestral village, is situated on the banks of the river Hughly about twenty-four miles above Calcutta.

Gokul Chandra Sen, great-grand father of Keshav, was an honest, hard-working, penurious man.

*b.* 15 Mar. 1785.
*d.* 2 Aug. 1844.

Ram Kamal Sen, grand-father, the real architect of the wealth, honour and reputation of the *Sens of Garifa*, was an original, powerful character, who by uncommon intelligence, industry and probity rose to high position in public life and became distinguished for learning, piety, social service and philanthropy. He built a mansion and settled in Calcutta.

1814—1848. Peary Mohan Sen, second son of Ram Kamal and father of Keshav, died young, ( at the age of thirty-four ), when Keshav was only ten years old; he was a most handsome, amiable and kind-hearted youngman; intelligent and refined in tastes; a fond husband, an affectionate father, most loyal to his elder brother, and as a member of society, most pleasant and noble-hearted.

Sarada Sundari, mother of Keshav, born about 1823, was of a fair complexion, rather tall in height, with a figure well-shaped and well-rounded, with features exquisitely chiselled, wearing over all her handsomeness the sacred veil of classical Hindu modesty. When forlorn widow-hood claimed her for its own, trials and privations thickened around her from every side; amidst difficulties and sorrows she was never for a single day indifferent to her religious vows and duties; her unrestricted sympathies endeared her to her orthodox relations as well as to the members of the Brahma Samaj; she harmonised her undoubted orthodoxy with the advanced ideas of her great son. Keshav said; "Where can there be another mother like you ?

Your virtues God has given me. All that I call my own is yours".

1838.—Nov. 19. Born at Collootolah, Calcutta, Keshav was a fair, calm, good-looking boy; his simple boyish beauty was angelic; he was exceedingly mild and reserved, but without any vanity or conceit. He was fond of fine things of all sorts. His intelligence was great, varied, unusual; he had a wonderful sagacity in making out the secrets of things. He was self-conscious and self-willed. He was a noble pure-minded boy, free from falsehood, free from vice. As a boy he was not religious, but certainly very moral; he was invariably mild and gentle and free from every kind of ill-temper, and laboured under a constitutional shyness. He was the pride of his mother's heart. the delight of his family, the ornament of his school, the glory of his village, and the natural leader of his companions. His boyish activities reproduced themselves in later life. He always grew, but he never outgrew any part of his nature. He was a master in the power of self-education. He never wasted any gift, never misused any faculty, never failed to make the best of any opportunity he ever got.

1845. At the age of five, the customary age in Bengal, he was placed under a tutor at home for preliminary instruction in the vernaculars.

1845 Two years later he was admitted to the Hindu College. Keshav prepared his lessons industriously, and added patient labour to natural genius. This habit of hard work and systematic industry equally distinguished him at all times of life. At annual examinations in the school he carried away prizes.

1852. Age 14. He was in the first senior class of the school.

1853 Most unwisely he was transferred to the Metropolitan College—a recently founded rival institution,—and introduced to studies beyond his capacities.

1854 Age 16. He rejoined the Hindu College, but did not return the same man; hence forth his educational career was not brilliant; his heart was not in the business at all.

While yet a student, with the aid of some Christian Missionaries he founded the British India Society

whose object was "the culture of literature and science". Here religious subjects were sometimes discussed.

1855. Age 17. Keshav established the Colootolah Evening School where youngmen of the neighbourhood were gathered and instructed in the general branches of knowledge. There was special study of Shakespeare with the staging of *Hamlet.* The school continued for three or four years.

1856. Apr. 27. Age 17. Keshav was married to Jaganmohini Debi (born about 1847), daughter of Chandra Kumar Mazoomdar of Bali near Calcutta, on a stormy night.

1856-1858. Keshav continued at College as a general student and chiefly devoted himself to the study of mental and moral philosophy; he was looked upon by the students in general as a sort of youthful philosopher. If his boyhood was grave, his youth was austere; he gave up the few frivolities of his earlier years. "My honey- moon was spent amid austerities in the house of the Lord. The house in which I lived and the room in which I slept were to me like a graveyard." (Keshav). It seemed as if the hand of destiny was upon him, secretly shaping

his character, and creating in him the elementary principles of the great work which he was so shortly to undertake. Those principles in their first formation were almost purely ethical. He matured his morality before he began his religion. Not that his morality at any stage of its formation was without the influencee of religion, but his religion, when he was a very youngman, was stern, stoical, colourless like his morality. From the very first he believed in the Supreme necessity of prayer. "I did not know what the right religion was, I did not know what the true church was. Why or for what I prayed I did not know, but in the first glimmer of light that came to me I heard the voice, 'Pray, pray, without prayer there is no other way."

1857. Age 18.

The first devotional meeting. A nameless solemnity, a thrilling reverence filled every heart, the Eternal Spirit of God for the first time seemed a hallowed presence. "Keshub spoke and we all wept." (Mozoomdar).

Keshav established the Good-will Fraternity, a purely religious institution, which continued its activity for full two years, and where he often

preached extempore in English with great enthusiasm. All his intelligence, energy and moral earnestness became ignited with an ascetic glow that burned fiercely in him. Every young-man who heard him became similarly excited. Debendra Nath Tagore (Maharshi) attended one of its meetings.

Keshav quietly entered the Brahma Samaj by signing the printed covenant.

"English education unsettled my mind, and left a void; I had given up idolatry, but had received no positive system of faith to replace it. And how could one live on earth without a system of positive religion? At last it pleased providence to reveal Himself unto me. I had not a single friend to speak to me of religion, God, and immortality. I was passing from idolatry into utter worldliness. Through Divine grace, however, I felt a longing for something higher; the consciousness of sin was awakened within me, sin was realised in the depth of my heart in all its enormity and blackness. And was there no remedy? Could I continue to bear life as a burden? Heaven said, 'No!

Sinner thou hast hope;' and I looked upward and there was a clear revelation to me. I felt that I was not groping in the dark as a helpless child, cast away by his parents in some dreary wilderness. I felt that I had a Heavenly Friend always near to succour me. God Himself told me this; no book, no teacher, but God Himself, in the secret recesses of my heart. God spoke to me in unmistakable language, and gave me the secret of spiritual life, and that was prayer, to which I owed my conversion. I at once composed forms of prayer for every morning and evening, and used them daily, although I was still a member of no Church on earth, and had no clear apprehension of God's character and attributes. I felt profoundly the efficacy of prayer in my own experience. I grew in wisdom, purity and love. But after this I felt the need of the communion of friends, from whom I might be enabled, in times of difficulty and doubt, to receive spiritual assistance and comfort. So I felt that not only belief in God was necessary but I wanted a real brotherhood on earth. Where was this true church to be found? I did not know.

Well, I established in my earlier days a small fraternity, in my own house, to which I gave the somewhat singular but significant name of 'The Goodwill Fraternity.' I did not allow myself for one moment to harbour sectarianism, but preached to my friends these two doctrines—God our father. every man our brother. When I felt that I wanted a Church, I found that the existing sects and chuches would not answer my purpose. A small publication of the Calcutta Brahmo Samaj fell into my hands, and as I read the chapter on 'What is Brahmoism' ? I found that it corresponded exactly with the inner conviction of my heart, the voice of God in the soul. I always felt that every outward book must be subordinated to the teachings of the Inner Spirit—that where God speaks through the Spirit in man all earthly teachers must be silent, and every man must bow down and accept in reverence what God thus revealed in the soul. I at once determined that I would join the Brahmo Somaj, or Indian Theistic Church." (*Lectures in England, 1870*)

Keshav at this time was a versatile and voracious reader. From eleven O'clock in the morning till about six

o'clock in the evening, he read regularly everyday in the Metcalfe Hall, since turned into the Imperial Library. He read theological and metaphysical works mostly, the history of philosophy being his delight. "Philosophy" says he, "first taught me insight and reflection, and turned my eyes inward from the things of the external world so that I began to reflect on my position, character and destiny." His mind had already formed the elementary conceptions of religion before he knew anything of the Brahma Samaj. The characteristic doctrines of Christianity made no impression upon him, and Hinduism he quietly discarded. "In utter helplessness," says he, "I threw myself at my Father's feet. And at last it pleased Providence to reveal the light of truth to me in a most mysterious manner, and from that time commenced a series of struggles, aspirations, and endeavours which resulted, I am happy to say, in peace, and in the conversion of the heart."

**1858. Age 20.** First trial: Keshav was pressed hard to submit to the customary ceremony of initiation into the orthodox Hindu faith; he stubbornly resisted and triumphed.

Left the Hindu College.

1859. April. Enacted *Vidhava-Vivaha-nataka* (widow-marriage-drama.)

April. 29. Started the Calcutta Brahmo School (School of Theology). It was an all-important institution in the Brahma movement; it systematised the uncertain conceptions of Brahma Theism on a sound rational basis of philosophy and created a nucleus of well-trained men who became missionaries of the Brahma Samaj. Debendra Nath Tagore discoursed on the opinions and faith of the Brahma Samaj embodied later in the Bengali treatise *Brahma dharmer mata o viswas.* Keshav delivered lectures on the philosophy of theism and morality, the substance of the lectures comprising the *Tracts for the Times.*

1859. Sept. 27. Voyage to Ceylon in the company of Debendra Nath Tagore.

1859, Nov. Age 21 Joined service as clerk in the Bank of Bengal—a family preserve; continued till June 1861. Again in 1867 filled a vacancy there for two months to preserve the interest of the family.

1860, June.* Began to publish monthly:—

# TRACTS FOR THE TIMES.

No. 1. June, 1860.

YOUNG BENGAL: THIS IS FOR YOU.

My dear friend,

I am extremely happy to learn that you have recently abandoned those sceptical notions which you hitherto so obstinately cherished, and which rendered you an object of pity to many of your friends. How shocking, cheerless, and pitiable, my friend, was your former life! Intoxicated with your high intellectual attainments you used to speak scoffingly of morality, religion and God, and conduct yourself with an amount of atheistic pride and recklessness awful to conceive. The liberal educatíon you received, instead of ennobling and exalting your mind, degraded and brutalized it. You started from disbelief in idolatry and superstition; but you landed in unbelief and scepticism. You doubted Hinduism; but you brought yourself to doubt religion altogether. Is this the destiny of education,—to foster scepticism and atheism, and instead of harmoniously developing all the powers and sentiments of the soul, and leading them to God, destroy the best and noblest of them,

and teach man to wield the weapons of revolt against the All-Holy, his Father and Master ?

It is impossible, my friend, to calculate the amount of mischief which has been wrought in our country by godless education. Not only has it shed its baneful influence upon the individual but it has proved an effective engine in counteracting the social advancement of the people, and in rendering more frightful the intellectual, domestic and moral destitution of the millions of our countrymen. Verily to this source, to the influences of ungodly education, is to be attributed the want of due progress in the social condition of the country. Witness the numerous Improvement Societies, Friendly Meetings, Debating Clubs, Literary Associations, &c., whose number is hourly increasing. Witness whole bodies of youngmen unanimously pledging themselves with all solemnity to momentous resolutions like these :— we shall enlighten the masses— elevate the condition of the females—encourage brotherly feeling. But what is the upshot of all this ? "Mere prattle without practice." Already those whom the experience of thirty years has taught any lesson have begun to lose all confidence in our high-sounding exhortations, burning

speeches, and declamatory tracts and pamphlets, and have learnt to draw a clear line of demarcation between lip patriotism and the country's actual good. Already some have begun to enquire why do our intelligent and promising youths keep themselves away from practical undertakings—why are they more talkers than doers.

Evidently, my friend, there is not the heart to work. Alas! the moral nature is asleep: the sense of duty is dead. There is lack of moral courage —want of an active religious principle in our pseudo-patriots. Else why is it that while there is, on the one hand, so much of intelligence and intellectual progress, there is, on the other, so little of practical work for the social advancement of the country? Verily, there is a line of demarcation between a mind trained to knowledge and a heart trained to faith, piety and moral courage. Rest assured, my friend, that if in our country intellectual progress went hand in hand with religious development, if our educated countrymen had initiated themselves in the living truths of religion, patriotism would not have been mere matter of oration and essay, but a reality in practice; and native society would have grown in health and prosperity. Drunkenness and all other fashionable vices would have been effec-

tually extirpated from this land. Mutual jealousies and enmity so fearfully prevalent here would have gradually faded away. That unity and nationality which is considered a great desideratum would have been established; and our countrymen, consolidated by religious love, would have realized all the benefits of united exertions and mutual sympathies, and effectually surmounted many of those difficulties in the way of social reforms which are now considered insuperable. Stimulated by faith, Young Bengal would have exchanged the easy luxurious bed of speculation for the arena of arduous action, and the visionary schemes of alnascharism for actual enterprise. Inspired with unconquerable enthusiasm by the Almighty, they would have, with mind and soul, intellect as as well as will, manfully endeavoured to promote their own best interests and those of their country.

May that day draw near, my brother, when your goodly example will be followed by others of our educated countrymen; when repenting for their sceptical recklessness, and prayerfully resigning themselves to the guidance of the Holy God they shall be regenerated in faith; when, instead of making knowledge an accursed guide

to the regions of killing scepticism and worldiness, they shall use it as the bright polestar in the sea of life, and steer the vessel of their soul unto godliness. May wisdom and faith reign in this country in blessed union!

Go on, my dear brother, in the hallowed course which you have begun. Difficulties will meet you in the way, temptations will entice you; but be not alarmed by the one, nor captivated by the other. Conduct yourself with wariness and constancy, strength and enthusiasm, but above all with thorough resignation to the Divine will. Steadily and prayerfully look up to Him—our Light and our Strength, our Father and our Friend. He will fill your mind with saving knowledge, your heart with the sweets of love, your soul with purity and your hands with strength and courage. Retain him in the depths of your heart, and affectionately cling to Him all the days you live. He will make you "a defenced city, a column of steel, and walls of brass".

# BE PRAYERFUL.

PRAYER: ITS SPONTANEITY, NECESSITY AND UTILITY.

Inquirer.—There is one point in the sequel of your letter which seems to rest on a grave error—I mean your advice to me to become prayerful. I look upon prayer as an unwarrantable extreme of dogmatic theology. It is thoroughly contradictory to logic and irreconcilable with philosophy.

Brahma—I am happy that you have, at the very outset, hit upon this pre-eminently important subject, for prayer forms the very gateway of faith. Now tell me what is it that troubles you on the subject.

Inquirer—Why, the very reasonableness of prayer I dispute. I have made it a point to remain aloof from prayer till I am logically convinced of its propriety.

Brahma—Logically convinced of its propriety! What curious notion of prayer! Well, tell me what prayer is.

Inquirer—It is merely a petition for the removal of a want. In its theological acceptation,

it means, I think, a petition to God for the removal of spiritual wants.

Brahma—Precisely so. Now closely reflect on this definition, and say—does a man pray because he has convinced himself by elaborate syllogistic arguments of the philosophical propriety of doing so? The child lifts its tearful eyes towards its mother and cries—"Mamma! milk." The benighted beggar knocks at the door of the first house he meets and exclaims—"Generous and noble soul, have mercy on me; help me." The patient looks up to the doctor and prays—"Doctor, save me;—I can bear no longer." Does logic impel the child, the beggar, the patient to ask for relief? Man feels a want and naturally prays for its removal. Evidently prayer in all such cases is but the spontaneous outpouring of the mind, and is not a reflective process.

Inquirer—Do you mean to extend the arguments which you have adduced in the case of eating and drinking to spiritual prayers to God?

Brahma—Certainly; as I ask mortal man for food because it is essential to the sustenance of my body, so I pray to my God for spiritual

blessings which are essential to the sustenance of my soul. In both cases a deep want, a pressing and irresistible necessity is the origin of prayer: in neither is there any reference to logic. The sinner remorsefully awakened to corruptions and iniquities of his life, smarts day and night under the compunctions of conscience, feels the want of deliverance, and looking up to the All-merciful, humbly prays:— "Lord, deliver me from my sins." Hath not the soul its hungerings and thirstings as the body hath? Does not man spontaneously pray for physical as well as spiritual sustenance and health? If you ask me why I pray to God, I will say—not because logic or psychology teaches me to do so— not because my school-master insists on my doing so, but because the deep wants of my soul drive me to the necessity of praying to Him Who is my father and my friend.

I—But what if it is spontaneous? I question its uses. You may say you are impelled by want to pray to God: but I feel no such want, I feel no necessity for prayer. How then can I reasonably engage myself in it unless you can satisfactorily prove its utility. Surely, I ought not to pray unless I am assured that I will bring home some good thereby. Let theologians say what they will, I can not but deny the utility of prayer, and steadfastly

maintain that men may be religious and virtuous without prayer. Witness some of the great men of our country: they do not pray, for they think it unreasonable and unnecessary to pray, and yet they possess a commendable character; they are honest, benevolent and philanthropic souls.

B.—How can you say that prayer is useless if you have never personally tried its utility? Let those only who have prayed say, whether prayer produces any beneficial effects or not, and whether they can do away with it in their religious pursuits. For, what is religion? Is it the pompous distribution of alms to thousands of indigent men? Is it the inauguration of a magnificent college, or the promotion of a social reform? Is it mere charity, or meekness, or compassion, or civility? Indeed a man may have one or all of these qualities, and yet he may not be religious. That man is religious who does everything for his salvation, who has made God the centre of all his thoughts and feelings and words and actions. That man is religious who has triumphed over the world, and consecrated his soul to God. There is in man an incessant struggle between the world and God, desire and duty, the senses and the soul, flesh and spirit; and it is in the triumph of the latter over the former that religion consists. If this is

religion, say, can any one attain to it without prayer? Can man buffet the formidable waves of worldliness without invoking the Divine aid? Can he establish the kingdom of holiness in his heart without the aid of the Fountain of Holiness? His unaided energies are not equal to so hard a fight—so awful a trial. It is not possible to sustain piety without Divine aid. With prayer you must begin religion, with prayer you must continue it. Prayer is the life of religion. We must needs pray to God. He is our strength: He is our joy: He is our all. Whoever humbly approacheth Him, and sincerely prayeth, returneth with abundant blessings. Prayer makes the weak powerful, the timid heroic, the dejected hopeful, the corrupt righteous, and the ignorant wise. Prayer lifts the soul above the platform of all that is earthly, corrupt and mean, and ushers it into the very presence of the All-Holy. When we are brought into His holy presence, the sins and sorrows and vexations of the world cannot encroach upon us, its perishable splendours cannot allure us; we are above its sin and temptations; the soul feels itself in the midst of Holiness and Purity, drinks the sweets of pure divine communion, and enjoys a serenity and a bliss unspeakable. It forgets its own weakness and infirmities, and is inspired with heavenly fire and

enthusiasm. Thus inspired, man walks in the path of life with invincible courage and unyielding resoluteness—fearing no earthly potentate for Omnipotence is on his side, yet loving all for his soul is filled with brotherly affection, magnifying the name of his Creator with fiery eloquence; and at last closes his earthly career amidst joy and glory immeasurable, chanting hosanas to the All-Holy. Such are the salutory effects of prayer. Such is the beatific life of the prayerful !

No. 3. August, 1860

# RELIGION OF LOVE.

LOVE EVERY MAN AS THY BROTHER.

Inquirer.—I owe you, my friend, a "debt immense of endless gratitude," for I feel that you have not merely initiated me in one particular virtue namely prayer but you have placed my whole soul in the way of salvation. But a serious difficulty has lately come across my path. I have been sorely perplexed with considerations about the choice of a creed. Each creed indentifying religion with its own dogmas seeks to drive me away from all hopes of religious improvement. Each church reckoning itself the only accredited dispenser of salvation summarily consigns the lot of every dissenter to perdition. Worried and hopeless I now sit down with the conviction that "it is easier for a camel to pass through the needle's eye" than for an impartial inquirer to find a resting-place in the tumultuous sea of theological polemics.

Brahma.—That resting-place which your troubled heart is searching for is Brahmoism. In that heaven-born religion you shall find peace

and comfort, truth for your understanding and salvation for your soul.

I—That is the very language of sectarianism; so every sectarian speaks of his own faith. Indeed he who is in quest of true faith goes as if through a market where each creed-monger comes with his own, holds it up as the best, and abuses his neighbour should he decry its worth; there is no creed which is not heaven-born, there is none which is not the holy way to salvation. Impartially examine the religious history of the world, and tell me does it not at once throw the mind into confusion and bewilderment. What a countless number of churches, sects and creeds does it exhibit! What an endless variety of doctrines and tenets, rituals and modes of worship! What an appalling spectacle of strifes, schisms, and even war, massacre and bloodshed! Hinduism, and Islamism, Buddhism and Zaroastrianism, Protestantism and Roman Catholicism, Methodism and Socinianism, Trinitarianism and Unitarianism, and thousand other *isms* are hotly engaged, with weapons offensive and defensive, in establishing their divine origin and infallibility! Revelations arrayed against revelations, incarnations against incarnations, miracles against miracles, infallibilities against infallibilities, pulpits against pulpits,

missionaries against missionaries, tracts against tracts ! Inexplicable anomalies ! From such unaccountable phenomena to evolve a meaning, from such a chaotic confusion to bring out order and light is a task which defies human reason.

B.—Woe to the unfortunate inquirer after true religion who reposes his faith in the decisions of synods and churches ! Indeed many a simple heart is ready to resound the voice of A. Kempis:— " I am weary of reading, I am weary of hearing; in Thee alone ( O God ) is the sum of my desires. Let all teachers be silent, let the whole creation be dumb before Thee, and do Thou only speak to my soul."

I.—What then is to be done ? Tell me, good friend, what I ought to do in respect to the choice of a religion. Where shall I find rest ? Where shall I enjoy peace ?

B.—In the sweet religion of Brahmoism. I cannot recommend you to sever yourself from the mass of mankind, and cling to an exclusive creed.

I.—If I have to turn away from sectarian creeds, with what earthly reason can I accept

Brahmoism ? Do not the Brahmos, like the followers of other religions constitute a sect ?

B.—O no, my friend. Brahmoism is anti-sectarian ; it is not the religion of a particular community, epoch or country ; it is universal religion ; it is Human Catholic religion. Brahmoism stands upon a basis co-extensive with human nature—upon principles that are catholic and universal. Brahmoism extends the holy current of love to the whole human race. Sectarianism limits and distorts man's views and sentiments ; Brahmoism expands his soul and enlarges his conceptions. The former is a battle-field in which communities strenuously fight against each other, actuated by inveterate jealousy or the maddening spirit of fanaticism. The latter is the kingdom of peace in which all mankind are a brotherhood, and love reigns supreme. O what a prodigious havoc has sectarianism made in the world ! The rack, the guillotine, and all sorts of powerful engines of torture and destruction have been pressed to its service. To-day, as in ancient times, its spirit is the same. Civilisation has not exterminated it, it has only rendered its manifestations less revolting and hideous. O my friend, be not a sectarian. Sectarianism is opposed to the very vital principle of religion,—to wit love.

Sacrifice all that is exclusive, narrow, and antagonistic—sacrifice all prejudices for time, place, and party—sacrifice all that soweth discord and unbrotherly feelings between man and man, if you seek true religion, for true religion is universal love. How can you hate others, treat them despitefully, and separate yourself from them, in the name of religion—in the name of that whose very essence is—Love God as thy Father, and man as thy brother ? Certainly the object of religion is to unite and bring together not to separate; to consolidate the whole mass of mankind—not to divide it into countless sections; to annihilate, not to raise partitions; to attract, not repel; to make a brother, not an enemy. This is the very object of Brahmoism, that sweet religion of universal love. Her mission is to summon together the various sections of humanity, and establish among them a peacefull and blessed brotherhood. Love, union, and peace are her watchwords. A Brahmo sees all men in relation to God. "He sees all in God and God in all and despiseth none." His soul is full of love, and he hails and hugs every man as his dear brother, in spite of all differences of denomination and creed, caste and colour. He is above party spirit, the peculiarities of country and age cannot fetter his mind. The world is his

home—the human race his family—God his Father. Blessed are they whose hearts are filled with the sweets of brotherly love. Verily it is "heaven upon earth" to live in a state of brotherhood. Oh when shall that day of universal peace and joy arrive, when every man shall exclaim from the depth of his heart: God is my Father, man is my brother. Say, is not a Christian, a Hindu, a Mahomedan, your brother? Is not every man, whether an inhabitant of Africa or Asia, Europe or America born of the same father? Are not the white and the black races both works of his hand? Is He not the Father of the rich and the poor, the wise and the illiterate? Is He not my Father, your father, and the Father of all men besides? If so, then perish sectarianism from the face of the earth—perish all that fosters discord and strife among mankind—perish all that rends God's holy family into antagonistic sects—perish all that prevents the kingdom of religion from being the abode of heavenly love, the land of holy alliance! May all nations unite in a holy chorus and joyfully chant the sweet anthem—"The fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man."

# BASIS OF BRAHMOISM.

Inquirer.—The simple argument which you so clearly and elaborately expounded the other day, viz.—that Brahmoism is a catholic and anti-sectarian creed, has drawn my heart towards it. But it is only with regard to the feeling of love which it cherishes that I am prepared to admit the excellence of your religion. You must allow me now to understand your doctrines, that I may impartially ascertain whether Brahmoism unites Love and Truth—whether it consists with reason at the same time that it satisfies the heart. I wish you will enlighten me on the foundation of Brahmoism. I am the more inclined to take up this topic in the outset, as I have come to learn that Brahmoism stands upon no book-revelation. Upon what then is it founded

B.—Its basis is in the depths of human nature. Brahmoism is founded upon those principles of the mind which are above, anterior to and independent of reflection—which the variations of opinion cannot alter or affect. It stands upon intuitions.

I.—Intuitions! Do you mean to say that

there are some principles in the mind which do not depend upon reflection ?

B.—Intuition denotes those cognitions which our nature immediately apprehends. To take the simplest case, tell me how you get at the knowledge of self ? Is not this an immediate and spontaneous cognition ? Tell me likewise how you come to know the reality of the external world. Is it not true that logic can never give you this knowledge ? Intuition has several distinguishing characteristics. The mark of intuition is immediacy. Intuitive truth is directly cognizable; it is seen face to face. Cause, substance, power, infinite, duty are all immediately apprehensible; no reflection can give us these ideas. Hence, some philosophers have applied the term Sense to intuition—as Moral Sense, Sense of Duty, Spiritual Sense, Senses of the Soul. Another mark of intuition is spoutaneity. The mind apprehends intuitive truths spontaneously, instinctively, without any voluntary effort; they spring outright from our nature; they are facts of our constitution; though we may ignore them in theory oftentimes they are found to govern us practically. The personality of our nature many have denied, and yet every man practically

believes that there are actions which he may do or not do as he chooses.

Another mark of intuition is universality. If intuitive truths are facts of our nature, and are independent of our will, they are universal. They are in the possession of the wise and the illiterate —of the rich and the poor. Another mark of intuition is originality. Intuitive truths are not inferences from certain premises. They furnish materials for reasoning and scientific reflection— themselves underived and primitive. The last characteristic is that intuitions are self-evident. They are axiomatic truths which do not admit of demonstration.

I. Convince me that the doctrine of intuition stands upon the authority of eminent philosophers.

B.—I could cite innumerable testimonies in favour of that doctrine from ancient as well as modern philosophy. I will enumerate only the principal ones for our present purpose. Among the ancients you will find Socrates, Plato, Cicero, Aristotle; among the moderns Descartes, Kant, Reid, Dugald Stewrt, Malebranche, Victor Cousin, Coleridge, Morell, M' Cosh, Sir William Hamilton —so that there is scarcely any philosopher of celebrity in ancient or modern times—excepting

of course the materialistic school—who does not in some shape or other afford his testimany in support of the doctrine of intuition.

I.—But how would you apply it to the subject under consideration, viz.—the basis of your religion ?

B.—There are two distinct kinds of knowledge —the one dependent upon the arbitrary use of our individual judgments, and therefore variable and contingent; the other above and independent of reasoning, and therefore universal and permanent. When religion lies in our intuitive consciousness, its truths we directly perceive, we require no argumentation, they approach us as self-evident realities. But when it passes on to our reflective consciousness we exercise our respective judgments and form different theories. In the one case mature is our guide and authority; in the other our arbitrary judgment. In the one case no evidence is needed; in the other we call for demonstration, we must sift the premises ere we accept the conclusion. In the sphere of intuition religion is natural, spontaneous, catholic, and living; in the sphere of reflection it is apt to become abnormal, sectarian, and dogmatic. Intuitive religion is a direct revelation of truths. It

does not derive its doctrines from books or men it is a code of primitive truths—the teachings of nature. It involves nothing peculiar to individuals or communities; it stands upon the universal conciousness of humanity. Thus stands Brahmoism—heaven-born and eternal Theism—far above the peculiarities of age and country and the infinite diversities of theological opinion. As in the mind of the individual there are on the one side natural and spontaneous beliefs, which constitute the identity of his nature with that of other men, and on the other his own judgments and opinions which are peculiar to him or to a particular sect; so in the consciousness of humanity there is the deep-rooted religion of intuition in spite of the shifting phenomena of sectarian polemics. Psychology shows us the fact that there are two distinct spheres of religious knowledge in the individual—the intuitive and the reflective. History illustrates it and verifies it in the actual religious beliefs and pursuits of mankind at large. What you see in the individual in miniature you see largely in the history of humanity. It is arbitrary reflection on the one hand which lies at the bottom of religious polemics—of differences, schisms and sectarian antagonisms. It is intuition on the other

hand which lies underneath those immutable and eternal truths which belong to all mankind, transcend the peculiarities of time and place, survive all vicissitudes and revolutions, buoy up above the fluctuations of sectarian opinions, and often shed their holy effulgence through the surrounding gloom of the grossest superstition and idolatry.

I.—But it strikes me that your religion thus exalted above all external and tangible things, above book-revelations and outward authority has too much of abstraction in it, and is thereby practically powerless and ineffectual. It wants that capacity of "coming home to our bosom and business", and exerting living influence on our soul, which less abstract religions possess.

B.—The very reverse is the fact. How animating for example is a Brahmo's knowledge of God ! He does not seek God through abstractions and generalizations. He has not to carve out his God by the chisel of logic; he does not worship an abstract metaphysical ideal of the Divinity, destitute of charms, and lifeless. Nor on the other hand is his God a historical personage, cognizable through the medium of representation and with the aid of proper evidences—and withal

a God "that *was* but not *is.*" His God is neither a logical nor historical divinity His God is an ever-living and ever-present Reality that can be seen and felt. No teacher, no idea, no abstract proposition, no consecrated object acts as a mediator between him and God. He stands before his Father face to face. He beholds Him who is infinite in time and space, wisdom and power, love and holiness, and is at once enlivened and enraptured; then the clouds of doubt fly away, the soul is armed with indomitable faith, all the spiritual energies are quickened, and love and joy sweeten the heart: then the soul falls at the feet of the All-Holy, saying—Life of my life! how sweet is it to enjoy Thy presence and be encircled by Thy loving arms. Blessed are they who instead of seeking God in books and abstract formularies—in the distance of space and time, see His loving face in the depths of their heart. Tell me now is not Brahmoism a living religion; do not its doctrines come home to us?

I.—Do you think your remarks are applicable to the intelligent as well as the illiterate? How can the latter who know nothing about the doctrine of intuition realize the living influence of your creed?

B.—True the philosophy of intuition is limited to a few, for every man is not a philosopher. But intuition itself is universal propriety; its truths are the patrimony of the human race. *Brahmoism* is co-extensive with human nature, though a few only can master *Brahmic theology.* Brahmoism is not confined to metaphysicians or historians. Metaphysical training is not an indispensable requisite to the knowledge of truths; scholarship is not the *sine qua non* of admission into our faith. Nature is the preceptor and the guide, she leads every simple, unsophisticated, and unbiassed man into the shrine of Brahmoism. The universe is the cathedral, nature the high priest, every man, whether an illiterate rustic or a profound philosopher, a throned monarch or a ragged clown, a native of Europe or of India, a man of the first or the nineteenth century, has access to his Father, and can worship and serve Him with faith and love. Do you suppose, my friend, that the God of Love reveals Himself only to those who possess the means of a rich education and who have health and strength sufficient to take advantage of such means? Are wealth, influence and academic lore the price of truth? If so, what an overwhelming majority of the human race, alas! are distined to live and die in spiritual

ignorance ! The deep problems of reflection may not be solvable by all; the living truths of intuition God hath given all men the means of knowing. In the depths of the soul hath He written in imperishable characters the simple doctrines of Theism which every one true to his nature may read. Behold then the grand final cause of this arrangement in our cognitive nature separating the intuitive from the reflective department of knowledge. In what an awful state would humanity have been if truth were yours or mine, if it depended upon the arbitrary decisions of individual judgments and the varying breath of popular opinion ? But blessed be the Merciful Lord—such is not the case. Let prejudices and and errors overpower the individual mind, let revolutions after revolutions shake comunities, let corrupt doctrines hallowed by time hold their supremacy over many a generation, nothing can destroy the intuitive truths of religion: they are above the reach of our will.

## BRETHREN, LOVE YOUR FATHER.

No. 5 October, 1860

* * * Is there then no help for me ? Is there no water of consolation in the whole earth to assuage the agonies of my heart ? How miserable and cheerless is my lot ! Neither day bringeth me rest nor night. Society hath no charms for me, neither hath solitude. Joy and peace have for ever forsaken me. Where is hell with all its appalling gloominess, its excruciating tortures, its undying fires, but in the mind of this depraved sinner. Oh that accursed recollection—that intolerable thought;—rebellion against the Lord—defiance of my Father's commands—ingratitude to my Supreme Benefactor, my Creator, and Preserver !—O Lord, my God, to Thee I owe my life and all the pleasures of my life. Thou art the Life of my life—my Father and Friend for ever.—Oh monstrous ingratitude ! Oh unpardonable disobedience !—Obdurate heart ! Hast thou rebelled against thy Father ? So good, so beneficent, so full of loving-kindness !—Without my Father how appalling is this world ! Amid its ten thousand horrors I live with none to befriend me. What is society ? a gathering of forei-

gners, no more : men unrelated to each other, and mindful of their own interests only. I dread socicty : there is nothing familiar or friendly in it. It is repulsive and appalling.—Where are now the beauties and pleasures of nature ? The sun and the moon, and the unnumbered small luminaries of the heaven shed but a feeble and and pallid light. Zephyr's softest breezes can scarce be distinguished from the chill biting blasts of winter. The raven and the philomel have joined in a hoarse melancholy concert, and are doing dolorous music the wide world round. There is no fragrance in the rose; the lily and and the violet have no beauty for me. Is not the world a vast church-yard in which nought but emblems of death are to be seen ?—Alas ! in what a gloomy and awful scene hast Thou left me, O my Father. How can I live without Thee ? O tell me, Father, where Thou art, that I may see Thy loving and benignant countenance, and pacify my harassed heart. There is none to console me Lord, none to bring peace to me.

—Methinks I hear a voice in the depths of my heart saying "Wail not. The father hath not forsaken you. He forsaketh none of His children, not even the most refractory and

wayward. Say not, He is distant from you. Of all things is He the ever nearest to your soul. Open then your eyes, penitent sinner ! and see His holy and amiable face. Sorrow shall be no more : suffering shall be at an end."

—O animating and soothing voice ! My Father has not forsaken me ! He is still with me ! In the blackened heart of this hardened sinner the All-Holy still abides.—What a celestial light now dawns upon my soul, and brightens and enlivens its whole horizon. How beautifully the whole scene clears up. Every thing has a halo of celestial glory around it. Now each movement of the air stirs up joy and hope : each up-springing lark gives wings to my aspirations : each flowing brook sets my soul a-going : each tuneful bird pours forth the sweets of holy hymns. Trees and mountains are glorifying my father's majesty : the vernal freshness of the variegated flowers is revealing His beauty. "Every violet blooms of God, each lily is fragrant with the presence of Deity." Everywhere I turn my eyes I see my Father. I ask my soul where my Father is : my soul reveals Him to me. Oh ! the world is full of Him. His spirit breathes everywhere, and animates every object. —Hou cheerful is the aspect of human society !

A common family—a blessed brotherhood ! A holy relationship binds all men : we are all children of the same Father.—It is the ineffable glory of my Father's face that has thus brightened and sweetened all things. Infinite is His mercy : immeasurable His goodness. Though blasphemed, reviled, scoffed at, and disobeyed, He has never forsaken me.

—Fellow-sinners ! contemplate for one moment His boundless mercy: think of His fatherly providence towards you. Though with steeled hearts you are repelling your Father's claims upon your affection and obedience, and running head long in an unfilial and ungrateful life, remember that He is still with you—ready to take you back if you want Him. Daily and hourly does He walk about our streets, exhorting His children to follow Him. To the palace and the hut, the mechanic's workshop and the scholar's closet, the husbandman's field and the capitalist's banking house, to places of worship as well as the prodigal's table, and the libertine's hall of pleasure He goeth. He goeth to the solitary thinker and the plodding man of business. He visiteth the wealthy and the penurious, the happy and the distressed. Every place he frequenteth; at the doors of every family He standeth, to preach His cause and

rouse up His children to purity and faith. Brethren imagine for one moment how anxious is our Father for our salvation; how warmly He loves us, how earnestly He seeks our love. He stands with us at all times, in all places, and under all circumstances, seeking only an opportunity to enter our hearts. Offer that opportunity, dear brethren, and welcome your Father.

—Affectionate Father, infinite is Thy mercy. The length and breadth of Thy loving-kindness who can measure? Immersed in the filth of worldliness I lay—an unfortunate and helpless wretch. But Thy blessing hand Thou didst outstretch, and deliver me from my death-like state. I saw Thy face and my sufferings like clouds passed away from my mind. May Thy face be for ever bofore my mind's eye. May I never forsake Thee, dear Lord and may all my thoughts, and feelings and actions in blessed harmony flow unto Thee. Grant me strength that I may live for ever Thy obedient servant, Thy dutiful child.

Sing the glories of the GOD OF MY SALVATION, ye nations of the world; Heaven and Earth, chant His dear name for ever and ever. Let the East and the West, the North and the South, be filled with sweet hosannas unto my Father. May

the rich and the poor, the wise and the simple, the powerful and the weak, the young and the old joyfully praise the Supreme God—Him whose kind providence for evermore watcheth over the interests of all. May He be dear to every individual, every family, and every community. Lord, when shall all Thy children worship and love Thee ?

# SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

No. 6. November 1860.

The following extracts constitute some of the evidences which clearly prove that, thanks to the progress of intelligence and free inquiry, the emancipation of the mind from the yoke of books and churches has been effected in many quarters of Christendom. The independent spirit of the age will not brook the prostration of the soul beneath any other authority except that of God: nor will it, in its onward march, halt at the peremptory bidding of orthodoxy;—"Thus far only shalt thou go." Freedom and progress are the watchwords of the 19th century. It is likewise beginning to be felt that true faith does not consist in an intellectual assent to historical events, but in earnast and steady reliance upon the ever-living, ever-present Deity. Many an earnest soul is strenuously protesting against the worship of the "dead letter"—antiquated symbols, and lifeless dogmas, and vindicting the living revelations of the spirit within. A strong yearning after the Living and Spiritual is thus clearly manifest. Nor, again, does the controversial and jealous spirit of sectarian dogmatism fall in with the catholic views of the

age. History has portrayed in frightful colours the mischievous effects of sectarianism, and has fully proved that *opinion* cannot serve as the bond of religious confraternity—that what is local, contingent, and specific, cannot constitute the basis of a church. Such a church as stands upon what is above time and place—upon catholic principles of Faith and Love, such a church as shall establish the brotherhood of man, many are looking forward to with eager expectations.

[Here follow illustrative extracts from the writings of J. D. Morell, T. Wilson, F. J. Foxton, R. W. Greg, J. Langford, W. Maccall, Fox, T. Parker, F. W. Newman, J. Young.]

"Already is it seen that the true advancement of theology does not depend so much upon any local ar purely inductive processes applied to the Scriptural data as upon the clearing of our religious intuitions, and the higher development of our whole religious consciousness. Thus as a higher and more spiritual philosophy advances, the arena of theological researches will be removed more and more from the rigion of these more mechanical and inductive principles, and the main efforts of theologians be

directed to the development of those lofty spiritual intuitions, in which Christianity, as a religion, essentially consists, and by the light of which alone we can interpret the language either of nature or revelation."—*Philosoply of Religion* by J. D. Morell.

"Why are we still seeking the law of God in the 'letter' of Jewish books, when the 'Spirit' of these very books refers us to our own Hearts as the tablet of the almighty? Why do we go on with endless and fruitless quotations of absolute "texts" to justify our postponement of Justice, Mercy and Faith to trivial questions of circumstantial belief and ceremomal practice? If it were not matter of actual experience it would sound incredible that men, women and children of all classes should in this Age and Country, be summoned to read, mark and learn, with prostration of soul, the oriental imaginings of Arab Historians and Poets, who lived and died some thousands of years since. It seems an infatuation almost surpassing example that civilized Christians of the nineteenth century should be called upon to listen with awe to the wild traditions of a remote Syrian tribe, celebrating the triumphs of their furious, jealous and fickle "God of Hosts" and "God of Battles." Yet

week after week, year after year, we go on ignoring the religious light of our own land and our own times in favour of the patriarchal haziness that obscured the land of Canaan in the days of Abraham and Moses, Joshua and Samson, David and Ezra. Our "Sabbaths," our "solemn meetings," our "appointed feasts" are still set apart to instruction setting forth how Sun and Moon stood still to countenance the slaughter of men by men; how the noon-tide shadow went back ten degrees to comfort a King; how the Ass opened her month in articulate talk with the Prophet; how city walls fell prostrate at the trumpet's blast, and how an iron axe floated at the good man's call"—*Catholicity, Spiritual and Intellectual* by T. Wilson.

"There is a Religion of Humanity,—a religion which belongs to human nature; which is not the religion of the Western world or of the Eastern world at all; but it may be of all worlds,—a religion which does not descend to have an earthly metropolis, whether it be Rome, Jerusalem or Mecca,—a religion which is not bound up within the covers of a book, be it the Vedas, the Koran, or the Bible,—a religion

which is not the property of the white race; or of the black race, not the religion of Europe or of Hindustan, of Greece or of Persia, of Palestine or of Egypt,—a religion which existed before Moses reformed that of Egypt and has existed since Luther reformed that of Europe—a religion which is not subordinated to the influences of climate; which does not rise or disappear with the attainment by mankind of a different stage,—a more advanced stage of civilization : which is the same permanently; continues, as human naturo continues, which is to be found wherever man is found; common as sense and reason, thought and feeling, mind and heart ; and which as it refers itself back to the earliest ages of history, so will not grow dim with age, nor fade in years through the coming generations."—*Religious Ideas* by Fox.

Man is greater than the Bible. That is one ray out of the sun—one drop from the infinite ocean. The inward Christ, which alone abideth for ever, has much to say which the Bible never told, though it may imply the whole. The Bible is made for man, not man for the Bible. Its truths are as old as the creation, repeated more or less purely in every tongue. Let its errors and absurdities no longer be forced on the pious

mind, but perish for ever : let the word of God come through Conscience, Reason, and holy Feeling, as light through the windows of morning. Worship with no master but God, no creed but Truth, no service but Love, and we have nothing to fear.—*Discourse of Religion* by T. Parker.

To set up other men's inspiration as our law is to disown that teaching of God, to which alone they owed their eminence. Christians were certain to degenerate, the moment they began to worship apostles, books and church-rules, and precedent and tradition, and thus to sip at other men's buckets, instead of drawing living water from the true fountain, God himself.—*The Soul* by F. W. Newman.

"Read within !" is the audible command of his own mind to every human being,—"within !" Go down to the deep place of intuitions, which own no earthly fountain ! Search, Look, Gaze, Try to detect and decipher the mysterious writing on the primitive tablets of the soul, which no created hand has traced ! Listen, also, in that profoundest sacredest adytum—away from all outer sounds which derange and dull the organ of hearing, wait for the faintest whisperings of the holy oracle ! Look and Listen,

Wait and Gaze, long, patiently, painfully ! The oracle *will* utter itself, the hidden holy writing *will* shine out and some divine letters, words, sentences *will* become legible to the eye.— *Province of Reason* by J. young.

## AN EXHORTATION.

No. 7. December 1860.

It is indeed painful to see man that "beauty of the world, and paragon of animals" dissipate his lifs in extravagant follies and sensualities, regardless as of the pre-eminent position which he occupies in creation, as of the sacred mission which he has to fulfil here below. Does it not awaken pity and regret to see him smother those godlike attributes of reason, judgment and conscience, wherewith he has been so nobly endowed, and under the cravings of tyrant appetites, pursue a course of reckless indulgences like wolves and leopards of the wilderness? Alas! man, what an enormous swerving from thy destiny—what a profound ignorance of what thou art and why thou livest!

Nay, art thou not aware that an awful government hangs over thee enjoining most solemn and high injunctions for thine observance, and holding forth appropriate recompense for vice and virtue? Instinct with a power which never fails to approve of what is right, and disapprove of what is wrong, and which with dictatorial authority commands the performance of the

former and prohibits the commission of the latter, art thou not every moment warned as to what thou oughtest to do? Is there not always within thee a conscience which firmly upholds the law of God, and ever cries. Beware?

Awake then, O man, from thy lethargy, and stir thyself to the great work of thy sanctification. Endeavour, at the outset, to cleanse and purify thyself by the waters of penitence and remorse. and prayerfully look up to Him who helpeth the weak and giveth light unto the blind. Away from the disastrous billows of worldliness, seek the peaceful harbour of God and truth. Beware, the world is full of vanities, the world is full of temptations. With wariness and deliberation, therefore, conduct thyself in the various walks of life, and see that in thy thoughts and words and actions thou art neither deluded by vanities nor enticed by temptations. Confine thy gaze no longer within the pales of the present moment, but with angel's ken view the distant regions of eternity. Let heaven-born anticipations regulate all thine actions and thoughts. Be it thy perpetual ambition to fulfil the ordinances of God with unfaltering assiduity and enthusiasm, and to attain to that eternal bliss which He has fixed as the

reward of virtue. Be it thy highest glory to subjugate the fierce passions of the soul, and to secure a triumphant entry into the domain of godliness and rectitude. So shall divine light irradiate the soul of mortal man; and so the world itself, now the hot-bed of sin and misery, shall become the garden of virtue and felicity: and all shall be peace and hilarity, bless and harmony. So "paradise is opened in the wild."

# TESTIMONIES TO THE VALIDITY OF INTUITIONS

PARTS I & II.

Nos. 8, 9. February, March 1861.

Even in this age when philosophy after numerous "schismatic aberrations" is establshing itself upon the indestructible beliefs of spontaneous consciousness, and the necessity of appeals to "the catholic principles of all philosophy" is being deeply felt, there seem to be in some quarters strong prejudices against the Doctrine of Intuitions. Some look upon it as an innovation in the history of philosophy—as the peaculiar theory of a new school rather than a valid system supported by the consentient testimony of great thinkers. Others thoroughly ignore the intuitive or *a priori* element in human knowledge and regard it as a capricious sentimentality or at least a derivative cognition. That these prejudices are generally the result of superficial views and indicate a tacit acquiescence in the convenient system of empiricism can hardly be disputed.

However, those who have deeply studied the history of philosophy must have learnt a different lesson. Indeed nothing is more certain than that such a principle in the mind as Intuition was

discovered and admitted in the earliest ages of speculation and has since received the sanction of almost all philosophers of celebrity; although its systematic exposition belongs to later times. It is worthy of remark that not only has the importance of the doctrine of intuition been recognised by modern philosophers, but is has been even acknowledged by some of them in unequivocal terms that true philosophy rests on the pedestal of intuition. If philosophy is the development of the normal truths of consciousness, and if the history of philosophy is the true record of the theories which have resulted from the investigation of the mind in different epochs and centuries, then certainly is this doctrine, not only valid but universal and eternal, and arguments drawn from it, whether applied to our conceptions of material objects, or of the transcendental truths of morality and religion are eminently scientific and challenge the assent of all mankind.

In illustration of the above remarks innumerable testimonies might be adduced. Some of them are here subjoind.

[Here follow extracts from Aristotle, Hallam, Locke, Morell, Hamilton, Shaftesbury, Buffier, Hume, Reid, Beattie, Jacobi, Ancillon, Coleridge, Dugald Stewart, Thomas Brown, Abercrombie, Cousin, M' Cosh, John Tulloch.

# THE REV. S. DYSON'S QUESTIONS ON BRAHMOISM ANSWERED.

No. 10. April, 1861.

1. Distinguish between intuition and consciousness.

Intitution denotes the native, presentative, involuntary, primitive, and catholic congnitions of the mind. Conciousness is a generic term applicable to all the states of the mind.

4. Does intuition produce religious truths, or does it only discriminate between religious truths and errors ?

Intuition *spontaneously* apprehends certain truths. The understanding *reflects* on them. The former furnishes *materials*, the latter gives *forms* to these materials, and thereby constructs science. To analyze, classify, discriminate, infer, judge, are processes of the understanding not intuition.

6. Are there other religious truths besides the intuitive ?

Yes: truths derived from experience.

10. Is not the necessity of education an argument against the existence of intuition ?

Is not the possibility of education an argument for the existence of intuitions ? Does education originate religious and moral ideas ? Does it not merely tend to *educe*, call forth, awaken, and develop them ? Can education give a blind man an idea of colour ?

14. Why do the Brahmos deny the possibility of book-revelation ?

Because revelation is subjective, not objective.

17. Are they true disciples of Brahmoism who receive sacraments of idolatry ?

Brahmoism is opposed to idolatory of both kinds—material and spiritual. The essence of her teachings is this :—

Worship neither the objects of the external world nor the passions of the heart ; but serve the one True God, and do all things unto His Glory.

—o—

## REVELATION.

No. 11. May 1861.

Inquirer—You have already satisfactorily explained to me the psychological validity of the *basis* of Brahmoism both by arguments from the conciousness of man and testimonies of distinguished metaphysicians. Let us now proceed to discuss the theory of revelation, and the other *doctrines* of your creed. It is my impression that although there are certain spiritual instincts in the mind, they are insufficient to give man the light of truth and that therefore a tangible revelation from God in the shape of a book is desireble, nay indispensable. How can Brahmoism pretending to be a rational system of faith discard revelation ?

Brahmo.—No, my friend, Brahmoism does not discard revelation. We believe that our understandings are not sufficient to give us salvation; and we acknowledge the paramount importance and necessity of a light from on high. We account revelation as the only way through which we come in contact with the saving truths of the spiritual world. The scriptures of all religions are regarded by us as rich repositories of what is noble, pure, and saving; and we accept

truths which are in them with profound reverence, although we do not identify them with revelation.

Revelation denotes religious knowledge communicated by God to man. Sects differ as to the medium, place, and time of such communication; but they agree as to its essence—the nature and the source. There are certain cognitions in the mind which are above, independent of, and anterior to our reasoning. These are the facts of intuitive conciousness; they are native, constitutional, original truths; they aret he voice of nature in the soul, and hence they may be called the communication of God, for "The voice of nature is the voice of God." They are not the elaborations of our reflective faculties. They have not their origin in the will; nor are they generated by impressions from the external world. Hence their source is the Diety; for self, God and the world constitute the three "ideas of reason." From God flows the blessed stream of intuitive truths. He is the author of intuitive revelation. Not only is intuition a revelation from God but it is the only possible revelation.

I.—Do you mean to say that book-revelation is at once, impossible?

B.—A book-revelation is self-contradictory and suicidal. Revelation is a state of the mind, an actual fact of consciousness. Hence a book revelation, in as much as it is a book, an external object, cannot be scientifically called a revelation. Revelation is subjective, not objective.

I.—Grant that intuitive truths communicated by God constitute true revelation. If these truths be embodied in a book, will not that book be entitled to be called a revelation to all mankind?

B.—Certainly not. Such a book can only prove that its author received revelation from God: but it is no revelation to me. That which is a revelation to you does not necessarily become a revelation to me, or to any other person. In order that it may be a revelation to me, the very same process, in which you received it must be repeated in my case: in other words I must intuitively realize the same in my mind. Else that revelation would be no revelation to me. Besides a book is an appeal not to the intuition, but to the understanding. It is but a field for the exercise of the intellectual powers. We do not apprehend its truths as soon as we come in contact with it. We are called upon to interpret words, phrases, sentences, evolve the latent meaning of the text,

draw inferences with the aid of reasoning processes: it is only in this way that we can acquire and enjoy its truths. This evidently holds good in the case of the so called book-revelations, for these, notwithstanding they are revelations, are still books, and are therefore treated by us as such. The result is that the actual revelation to each reader is not the whole book, but the amount of truth realized by him. Is there not then something absurd in the attempts generally made to hold up certain books as standing revelations to all mankind ?

I.—Your remarks only apply to *fallible* books. But if a book be found which speaks truth, all truth, and nothing but the truth, would you not accept it as a revelation from God ?

B.—Not until it is actually present in our consciousness as truth, all truth, and nothing but the truth. The circumstance of infallibility, even if admitted, does not in any way bridge the gulf between the subjective and the objective. The infallible book is still outside my mind: what avails then its infallibility ?

I.—Its object is to afford a fixed code of morality and religion, and by actually impres-

sing it on the reader's mind help him to find truth. Nobody denies that it is an external thing; but it aims to produce truth in the minds of all men.

B.—That may be its object; but no book-revelation ever accomplished it. The infallibility of book-revelation might look very well as a theory, a dogma; but practically is useless. The reason is obvious. The infallible word of God is submitted to the judgment of a certain number of people, to be dealt in the way they choose; they interpret the passages of the book, construe words, and draw conclusions according to their respective arbitrary views and opinions. And what is the result? In consequence of different interpretations different theories and doctrines start up: these give birth to hostile churches and sects. These churches again in course of time undergo many schisms: and thus divisions and sub-divisions arise amongst the upholders of the some book. Thus far from securing unity of opinion and faith the infallible book originates innumerable differences and even contradictions and hostilities. This is the philosophy of the argument. It is easy to verify it historically. Examine the history of Christianity, and you will at once find the Bible

has not succeeded in opposing its fixedness to the prevalence of jarring opinions and even diametrically opposite theories. There is perhaps between the most devout Roman Catholic and the staunchest Unitarian as much disparity, essentially speaking, as between a Hindoo and a Mahomedan. The fact is, an infallible book-revelation without infallible interpretation is simply useless. Infallible Hebrew or Sanskrit or Arabic necessitates infallible translation, infallible translations require infallible commentaries and criticism, infallible dictionary and chronology, infallible history, &c. In short, in order that a book-revelation may fairly stand out as the infallible word of God for all practical purposes, it is indispensible that all the lights by which we are to arrive at its meaning must be infallible too. But even this is not all. Let the text be infallible; let all means by which it should be interpreted be infallible, the question still stares us in the face—how can a book which is all truth interpreted by infallible keys communicate to our minds all truth?—how can objective infallibllity convert itself into a subjective fact? Is the working mind, the interpreting agent infallible? This problem must be satisfactorily solved ere the doctrine of infallibility can be

accepted. For what avails a splendid array of objective infallibilities, if the process of interpretation and comprehension is to be conducted by our fallible judgments? Let there be a world of outward infallibilities: "the mind is its own world, and can create a hell out of heaven."

It is clear then that a book whether fallible or infallible cannot be identified with revelation. The essence of revelation lies not in the outward book, but in the "kingdom within"—not in the text, but in the soul. Revelation is spiritual communication made to the mind, and is realized and realizable in the intuitional conciousness only.

I.—All this I admit. But it strikes me that you are dilating on the *potentialities* of human nature. Your arguments do not satisfactorily meet the *actual* deficiencies and wants of mankind. Man has practically turned astray from the truth; darkness is within him; his nature is depraved. Under such circumstances is not an external revelation necessary which may deliver the soul from ignorance and impurity, and regenerate it in faith and holiness?

B.—Undoubtedly. Such a revelation is indispensable; and its importance it is impossible to

to exaggerate. This is revelation in its secondary and comprehensive signification. In this sense it means an outward objective collection of principles co-incident with our natural and intuitive convictions, which renders more vivid our intuitive apperceptions, and aids us in the attainment of truth and salvation. Such an objective revelation far from militating against the argument already enunciated does rather presuppose and depend upon the intuitions of the mind, in so much that they constitute the life and evidence of all objective revelations.

I.—That is only *negative* evidence and has hardly any value: for there are many passages, for instance, in the Bible which do not tally with any principle within, but which must nevertheless be accepted as true. The fact is that miracles and external evidences in general contitute the only positive evidence of book-revelation—the foundation on which rational faith in the doctrines of book-revelation rests.

B.—How can that be? Miracles can never authenticate a doctrine—so says the Bible itself. Truth as well as untruth is supported by miracles: good men and bad men are represented as miracle-workers.

( Deut, XIII 1—5; Math VII, 22, 23;

XXIV. 24; Mark IX: 38; 2 Cor. XI. 13.). How then can truth be distinguished from untruth, a prophet from an imposter ? It is an untenable theory that Christian faith is possible only as the result of the historical study of its external evidences. Christianity stands on the moral evidences of the Bible. Such evidences presuppose a light within us which enables us to distinguish truth from error. When we accept the truths of the Bible we do so because they find a response, an assent, an echo within us—because they tally and harmonise with the truths engraven on the soul. If such is the case why shall we worship any objective revelation in particular ? why shall we become bibliolators ? Are there not intuitive truths in the Koran and the Shastras, in Nanuk and Hafiz?" Is there not much to make us wise and righteous unto salvation in all these books and thousand others ? Whatever tends to enkindle noble sentiments, remove impurities, awaken faith, and bestir the will to practical virtue—whatever leads us to know and love the truth as it is in God is fairly entitled to be called revelation: it is inmaterial where it is found. This however is only an application of the secondary signification I have already adverted to. But the application does not stop here. Books

are not the only enlighteners of the mind. Does not the material universe edify us ? The volume of nature displays throughout a moral purport. Every object in the universe, from the stupendous orbs revolving in the air to the smallest grain of sand reveals God. His power and majesty, His wisdom and justice, His love and providence shine everywhere. The whole of nature is ever and anon preaching million voiced the truths of religion and the glories of the Almighty Creator. To "find tongues in in trees, books in running brooks, sermons in stones, and good in everything" is certainly not a poetical illusion, but the experience of faith.

Thus if revelation is taken in its primary and literal signification, viz., knowledge comunicated by god, it is possible only as a fact of mind, and cannot therefore be identified with books or other external objects, however rich they may be with moral and religious significance. It is altogether subjective, and hence whatever truth remains in an objectified state is beyond its province. The dogma of book-revelation therefore falls to the ground. If on the other hand revelation is understood in its secondary acceptation, viz., whatever teaches us precious doctrines, and elevates our moral and religious conceptions and

feelings, far from being confined to the texts of any particular book as the exclusive sacred repository of divine truths, it extends over all books that inculcate truth—nay it embraces the whole universe as a living revelation. Such is our doctrine of revelation. If from its theoretical we turn our eyes for a moment to its practical aspect we land in conclusions no less gratifying. It leads us to forsake all prejudices and bigotry; and cull truth wherever we can find it. Whether in the pages of the Bible or the Koran, whether in the wonders of the phenomena of the mind or the beauties and sublimities of the external world, whether in the magnificent starry convex above or the boundless ocean below, whether in the picturesqne valley variegated with vernal flowers or the sweet strains of feathered songsters vibrating though the forest, whether in the development of human nature so magnificently exhibited in the amphitheatre of history or in the principles of piety and love vividly portrayed in the biographies of great men—wherever we can find truth there we should go and accept it. We are thus taught the salutary lesson that truth is more precious than books—living spirit more than the dead letter—saving doctrine more than creeds and churches. Thus we are

summoned to lay down all prejudices for age, locality, and person, and reverentilaly accept truth whether affered by a Jew or gentile Christion or a Heathen, Hindoo or Mahomedan. Thus while different sects repair to their respective scriptures, and fight against each other to vindicate their own, a Brahmo beholds the Great Revealer, the Source of all revelation, in the regions of his entuitive consciousness, and there receives at His feet the different teachings of sanctifying knowledge: and while they worship the Bible, the Koran, or the Vedas, and shut up truth within the pales of time, place, and person, he seeks revelation in all times, in all places, and in all objects, for God is omnipresent and ever-living.

O my brother, it comports not with Brahmoism's exalted and catholic spirit to scoff at or hate book-revelations. Such a scoffing and hatred we consider an abomination. It is our duty to kiss and love truth wherever we can find it. O those charming psalms of David that draw tears of piety from the hardest heart and bring relief even unto the most afflicted! How inexhanstible are the riches of the precepts of Jesus! Can any one read them without being

conscious that the heart is growing warm with love and the soul strong with faith and enthusiasm ? If you have studied the writings of that child of resignation, *Hafiz*, have you not oftentimes felt yourself soaring upon the wings of faith to the regions above, and there drinking plenteously the sweets of God's love in His blissful presence and encircled by His affectionate arms ? When the *Upanishads* describe in stirring eloquence the sublimities of the spiritual world, what heart can crawl on the platform of vulgar cares, or forbear feeling the exalted joy and strength of the higher nature ? Can it be believed that a heart that lustily thirsteth after wisdom unto salvation would reject or even view with indiffernce the noble ideas set forth in such books ? A prejudice in this matter betrays only a disregard of truth : and a Brahmic heart abhors such a prejudice.

## ATONEMENT AND SALVATION.

No. 12. June 1861

Inquirer.—Your doctrines regarding the attributes of God, next world and the destiny of life tend only to prove the philosophical correctness of your creed, but it leaves the great practical problem of salvation unsolved. It does not respond to the deep interrogation of the soul—"what shall I do to be saved ?"

B.—Brahmoism by representing God as infinite in mercy and loving-kindness gives hope and assurance to the grossest sinner that he will receive salvation at His hand.

I.—True the divine attribute of mercy proves by implication that the God of Love gives salvation to sinners : but is not such indulgence to sinners incompatible with another attribute, viz., justice ? Is not God infinite in justice as He is in goodness ? How then can a sin once committed be atoned for, as it has already stirred justice to the execution of its rigid and irrevocable decrees ? That which is done is done : you *must* suffer for it.

B.—Atonement is impossible in fhe nature

of things if it means uncommitting a sin already committed. Atonement scientifically considered, is nothing more than a return to God. The word *atone* simply means to be *at one* with God—to be reconciled to Him. By the commission of sin we turn astray from Him: we cease to enjoy His company. By atonement we renounce our sin, again draw near to Him, and enjoy the blessings of His company. Turning back to God is the whole philosophy of atonement. Hence our belief that "repentence is atonement," because repentence is the indispensable means of turning away from iniquity and returning to God.

I.—But the mere circumstance of eschewing evil cannot constitute reconciliation with God: Unless some sacrifice is made, some equivalent is offered, no sinner can, by the mere fact of being reformed, receive His forgiveness; unless we offer adequate compensation, we cannot expect to be restored to His favour. So that atonement, though it denotes reconciliation, becomes synonymous with the means of appeasing an offended Deity.

B.—What an unworthy conception of the divine nature! Is it not audacious to liken the

the most High to the vindictive and vengeful creatures of earth? Is He like man offended and enraged by insult, and appeased and satisfied by an apology or bribe, by tears or sacrifices? These are evidently the revolting dogmas of anthropomorphism which imputes to the Deity the passions and infirmities of the flesh, and the varied susceptibilities of good and evil incident to humanity, and in a word, "hypostatizes and deifies" its own limited conceptions instead of worshipping the true God. Our God is Absolute love. His is not the finite, phenomenl love of humanity, but everlasting and abiding love, immutable as His nature. He changeth not though we change: our virtues and vices do not modify His nature. The whole change which sin brings on is in ourselves, not in Him: so likewise the change consequent on atonement. Our sin does not stir His vangeance: our entreaties do not dissuade Him from His uniform purpose. What means then appeasing the wrath of God? What need of sin-offerings? True sacrifice means sacrifice of sin; true offering is the offering of the heart; true atonement a return to righteousness and thereby to God.

I—If there is no variableness in God in regard to His Love, the same is true in regard to H s

justice; there is no forgiveness at the expense of justice. How can divine justice and mercy be reconciled?

B.—In the dispensation of punishment justice and mercy are both manifest. The difficulty you speak of arises solely from a misconception of the real end of punishment. No one is so foolish as to suppose that God inflicts punishment on sinners for gratifying His insatiable thirst for vengeance, that He delights in their agonies. [It is for our welfare that He visits our sins with due punishment.]- Justice divorced from benevolence is a monstrosity. [The God of Love punishes us not for punishment's sake, but because He loves us and desires our welfare.] Suppose due retribution were remitted, and sinners were systematically forgiven, would not an impetus be afforded by such indulgence to all the recklessness of unrestrained and unrestrainable wickedness? None will deny that remission of moral punishment far from being conducive is hopelessly prejudicial to the interests of sinners. The truth is that such punishment, is remedial it has amendment for its object. It acts like the unpalatable drug, painful in its immediate effects but beneficial in the end. It is the only means which the sinner has of even becoming conscious of his

iniquities. Can such means be withheld from him without interfering with the best interests of his soul? It is infliction, therefore, and not remission of punishment that shows the Father's love towards His children. Punishment is inflicted—justice is satisfied; amendment is sought—goodness is satisfied. Thus in the act of punishment justice and mercy instead of running counter to each other most beautifully harmonize.

I.—You take a very mild view of punishment. Does not sin against Infinite Holiness deserve infinite punishment—eternal hell?

B.—It is perfectly immaterial whether the punishment is heavy or light so long as its object is admitted to be the amendment of sinners. God may visit us with the direst torments: but such torments are intended for our welfare, and will continue till they effect this object. But to believe that they are everlasting,—that sinners are doomed to eternal perdition, is to accept a dogma which is subversive of the principles of divine justice and mercy.

I.—If it is true, then, that God's mercy is not interfered with by His justice, and that the grossest sinner after suffering punishment can find

acceptance with Him, what is the necessity for mediatorial redemption and vicarious atonement ?

B.—Now whatever, the very idea of delivering a sinner from his iniquity by saddling another party with it is preposterous in the extreme. The transfer of punishment from man to man is an utter impossibility in the moral goverment of God. Those who believe otherwise betray an ignorance of the nature of moral punishment. The punishment of sin is not, as some suppose, a penalty arbitrarily and artificially connected with sin, but is its natural and necessary consequence. It is not something which a capricious judge awards and which might be remitted, extenuated, or transferred at his pleasure, but a necessary consequence of sin fixed by the creator of the universe, and can be separated from it only by upsetting the established order of things. The relation that subsists between sin and punishment is that of cause and effect, and is therefore *necessary* not *arbitrary*. Such being the case it is impossible that you should suffer the punishment which my sin deserves, since the cause being in me, the effect must like-wise be in me. Innocence can never be the victim of that retribution which is due to sin alone : nor can sin enjoy the

reward which is due to virtue alone. The transfer of moral punishment then is absolutely impossible: and it is idle to discuss whether the transfer is to be made to an inferior animal or a human being. A scapegoal is but a fantastic dream. The ideas of cleansing sin by sacrifices, holy ablutions, or the recital of sacred texts, of buying atonement with the price of blood, &c., are only relics of anthropomorphism, Let theorists dream dreams, *there is no royal road to salvation.* Behold then the baselessness of the stupendous fabric of the dogma of vicarious atonement! Nor is this dogma less mischievous in its practical tendencies than it is absurd in theory. By giving sinners the assurance that the awful punishment of their sins will be transferred to others provided they believe in some scheme of mediatorial atonement, and thereby dispelling all fears as to the penalty which actually await them, it systematically encourages wickedness, far from discouraging it. By identifying virtue and vice with dogmatic belief and unbelief, with consent and dissent, it makes the sinner believe he is forgiven in spite of the rottenness of his soul, and thus leads him to forego all attempts at attaining actual purity. It makes sin and punishment barterable commodities: it paralizes divine justice,

makes punishment a mere name, lulls conscience to sleep, gives an imaginary elysium to sin and converts God's moral government into a scene of lawlessness, injustice and disorder, in which "the elect" buy out the law.

I.—A sin once committed can by no means be undone; moral punishment can neither be remitted nor transferred; it must come with its whole weight upon sinners. Are not such doctrines calculated to extinguish even the last ray of hope and joy in the sinner's mind? Instead ef showing him the road to salvation, and delivering him from his troubles, they only prove his case hopeless, by aggravating in a ten-fold ratio the already overpowering fears and anxieties of his mind.

B.—Salvation literally means deliverance, from *salvo*, to save. Deliverance from what?—one would naturally ask. If it means deliverance from *punishment*, salvation is impossible, for the connection of sin with punishment is necessary. Nor is such deliverance desirable if punishment is the means of amendment. But true salvation denotes simply diliverance from *sin*, In this sense it is both possible and desirable. To be freed from the effect so long as the cause continues to operate is not

possible; but to be freed from the cause itself is possible. When the sinner deeply repents for his sins, struggles for deliverance, and prays for strength, the God of Love in the fullness of His mercy humbles Himself to hear his cries and lift him from the gulf of sin. As he prays and labours, he gains greater strength and recieves greater light in the presence of his Lord. To every sinner, even the grossest, the promise of reconciliation hath been made. The arms of Everlasting Mercy are stretched for the reception of all; the fault is ours if we neglect to have recourse to Him. It is not He that refuses salvation but we that rafuse to accept it. Pray—pray sincerely, earnestly, and unceasingly, resolve solemenly, labour energetically, persevere steadily—above all throw yourself wholly upon the arms of the God of Love; He will help you in overcoming temptations, and sacrificing the enemies of the soul by giviug you strength, enthusiasn and fortitude. Rely upon Him—the sole Friend of the fallen. the sole Protector of sinners—and He shall save you. He is our all; our Father, our Teacher, our Saviour. He is our only hope amidst the trials and perils of life. He is our light, our love, our life. To Him, the God of salvation, belongeth glory in

heaven and earth—in time and eternity. May all sinners learn to place their deepest faith in Him, their only Benefactor and Friend—that the sweets of salvation may abound in their lives ?

October, 1860
Age 21.

Keshav started a society under the name of the Sangat Sabha for religious conversation. Its influence was remarkable. Strange earnestness characterised every proceeding; the members, steadfast followers of Keshav, the quintessence of the Brahmo School and the Good Will Fraternity, met frequenty, and with fiery zeal for self-reformation, laid bare their whole hearts, freely and frankly discussed their own faults, courted mutual aid and criticism, and under Keshav's guidance made most genuine progress in spiritual and moral life. Hunger and fatigue seemed to have no power over them. They sat up the whole night, from the evening to the morning twilight in Keshav's room, comparing experiences, practising penitence, making resolutions, offering prayers. In them Keshav found congenial spirits; he magnetised them, they magnetised him; and together they formed a nucleus of organisation, out of which the best materials of Keshav's subsequent movements were supplied. When Keshav signalised his career by the renunciation of his worldly prospects, and resigned his post in the Bank of Bengal, the

men of the Sangat began to take leave of secular life, till the Brahma Samaj came to possess a powerful body of apostolical workers, all in the prime vigour of life, consecrated with their families to self-sacrifice, determined to spread the spirit and principles of Hindu Theism by ceaseless labours throughout the land.

Keshav also began a correspondence with Theists in other parts of the world. The two best known in England at the time were Mr. Francis William Newman and Miss Frances Power Cobbe. Keshav proposed an educational agitation, both in England and India, with the object of starting more efficient colleges and schools than what the Government provided,

October, 1861. and convened a great meeting in the Brahma Samaj building, where he gave a brilliant address which dwelt on the need of providing for right kind of education, and the duties of the Brahma Samaj in that direction.

Failure of crops in Upper India towards the end of 1860 resulted in a dreadfull famine, and promnient men of Calcutta, both Hindu and Christian, tried to awaken public

sympathy. Dr. Duff's activities in this connection being highly commendable. Hitherto the Brahma Samaj had not considered it a duty to mix in such movements. Keshav percieved the necessity and moral fitness of taking part in them, and advised a famine relief service which Devendra Nath held with great demonstration. The family of Devendra Nath contributed liberally. The poorer part of the congregation were not idle. The men filled bags with copper coins, soliciting aid from every body they met, the women parted with their jewels and clothes, and odds and ends of every description were brought in that could be converted into money to buy food for the hungry and the dying.

25 March, 1861.

2 May, 1861.

Keshav went to Krishnagar on his first missionary expedition. It was indeed a pleasure trip which he utilised to propagate by public lectures the religion of the Brahma Samaj. Keshav's extempore lectures, altogether an original style of propagation at the time, drew large audiences. The Trinitarian missionary, Mr. Dyson, found it necessary to deliver counter-lectures. All Krishnagar sided

with the Brahma leader. This first missionary effort was prolific in many ways.

26 July, 1861. The first marriage solemnised according to Brahmic rites was that of Sukumari Devi daughter of Devendra Nath Tagore. Keshav composed for the occasion the charge to the couple, i. e. the sermon, which found a permanent place in the nuptials of the Brahma Samaj.

1 August, 1861. With a view to propagate his ideas on educational, religious and other matters Keshav started the *Indian Mirror* as a fortnightly journal.

1857—62. During the five years following his entry into Brahma Samaj Keshav developed into a lecturer, tract-writer, reformer, missionary and philanthropist. The activities of his moral and religious nature developed steadily. He became the apostle of every manner of enlightened public spirit, of continued reconstructive social progress. These improvements he added to his foregone attainments of ascetic moral rigour, high piercing intelligence, burning restless enthusiasm. The faith, the prayerfulness, the soaring

impulses of inspiration, the humilities, the tender penitences were all there, but undeveloped, in a state of volcanic combustion, the fierce flame of which formed a sort of contagious frenzy. Devendra Nath spoke of Keshav thus :—"Whatever he thought in his in his mind he had the power to express in speech. Whatever he said, he had the power to do. Whatever he did, he had the power of making other men do." Thus gradually Keshav's life became the law of progress for the Brahma Samaj.

11 January, 1862.

In the hall of the Bhavanipur (Calcutta) Brahma Samaj Keshav delivered a lecture on—

## THE DESTINY OF HUMAN LIFE.

The circumstance of my having chosen the Destiny of Human Life for my subject requires, perhaps, a word of explanation. That this subject involves an inquiry of stupendous magnitude and of paramount importance to us, as rational and accountable agents, cannot be disputed. It embraces the grandest problem of our existence, and furnishes an answer to the first query of the soul—what am I and wherefore this life ? It evolves the very fundamental principles of ethics

and religion; it exhibits our true position, unfolds the meaning of duty, and leaves us without an excuse for the accomplishment of that duty. Hence it may be said to "come home to our bosom and business." Cerainly every man having a soul to look after aught seriously to enter upon this inquiry as the chiefest inquiry of his life here and hereafter; for without a true appreciation of our destiny, all knowledge is useless, and all atetmpts at progress but aimless or misdirected efforts.

Has man any assigned path for his career in life, any fixed purpose to accomplish? Or is he a creature of chance, a pendant that hangs on circumstances, an eccentric phenomenon in the universe, with a purposeless, aimless life? If we survey the amplitudes of nature, we will find that all objects have peculiar purposes to accomplish. Throughout the whole range of animate as well as inanimate existence, there is hardly anything which has not a fixed course to pursue,—fixed by the irreversible laws of Providence. Each object has a fixed mode of action, each being is destined for a peculiar mode of life. Behold the countless planetary orbs of heaven—those luminaries suspended on

high ! They revolve unceasingly in their respective orbits, around their respective suns; and they never depart from their prescribed paths. This revolution around their central suns is their *destined* movement. The egg gradually develops itself till the bird comes out which grows in size and stature, livs in its peculiar style, then perishes. So the seed develops itself and forms the tree with its peculiar leaves flowers, and fruits. This development is the Destiny of the seed. The aggregate of these regularities in the pursuit of peculiar and fixed destinies may be denominated NATURE. It is *natural* for the rose to have the colour, form, size, and mode of development, to the combination of which we give the name Rose : were they different, we would call the rose unnatural. It is natural for the sun to impart light and heat for hear to expand, and cold to contract objects ; it is natural for our lungs to inhale oxygen and to exhale carbonic acid gas ; it is natural for light to exhibit seven primary colours; it is natural for water, in obedienc to hydrastatic law, to seek its own level. This constant tendency towards destiny, then, this conformity with established law, is Nature. I apprehend, however, we have taken the term Destiny in its widest

and, perhaps, unphilosophical siginfication, for its application to gross material objects may be considered objectionable by reason of the importance and grandeur with which theology has invested it. It applies with characteristic force to man. In a world in which all material objects and inferior animals pursue their respective paths fixed by Providence, man cannot be supposed to be a purposeless, eccentric phenomenon. He also has a part to play : and to play this part is consonant to his nature. His destiny is to attain God, or to make constant progress into Him. To strive to do this is natural : the reverse is unnatural; virtue is natural to man, and vice is unnatural. The only material difference in the two cases is that, while the inferior animals are forced to pursue their destiny by blind necessities—and have no free power of their own, man voluntarily endeavours to accomplish his destiny : he may, if he chooses, refrain from its pursuit. The destiny of man is the destiny of a *person* not of a *thing.* This freedom. however, does not in any way affect the argument of a *fixed* destiny for man. His destiny is not—to follow either virtue or vice according as his choice may lead him: he is destined to attain the former.

Virtue is natural to man. This opinion is evidently opposed to the theory of a certain class of theologians, who regard ungodliness as the natural condition of man. They uphold the notorious dogma of the universal depravity of human nature. They belive that man is naturally corrupt and wicked, and righteousness is anything but natural to him. Hence with them, the pursuit of destiny by man is not a *natural* process. Our view is different. To live religiously is to live naturally : to live naturally is to act up to the dictates of conscience. To live to nature is to live to God. There can be no corruption in the nature of man as created by, and coming direcly from, the hands of God. Our impurities are not God's creation but the creation of our free will; and unreasonable is it to charge nature, and thereby nature's God, with sins of our own doing. Man is destined by Providence to pursue the path of virtue and truth : not to pursue it is unnatural.

Man's destiny, then, is to attain God, or make progress unto Him. Progress or development is the end of our being. This is the true vocation or mission of man in this world. Every man is thus a missionary. We have been sent to this world with a mission sacred and solemn,

for the proper discharge of which we are accountable to Him Who hath sent us. There are many who suppose the mission of man to be to secure deliverance from sin and its punishment. This is Salvation according to them. This, however, does not indicate anything positive as the end of our being. [ True Salvation has a negative, as well as a positive side: it liberates us from sin and the world and it gives besides Truth and God. This salvation—the soul's progress unto God, in faith, purity, and love, is to us the grand object of life. But this progress must be of the whole life: we must seek the development of the whole man. All the compartments of life must advance in the way of truth: all the powers and sentiments of the mind must be cultivated and developed. In weatever way we choose to divide life, the principle for which we are contending remains unaffected: all the ideas and energies of which we are possessed, must be duly cultivated; the neglect of any one of them is so much departure from our destiny. [This normal development of the whole man—this "one continued growth of heavenward enterprise," is the true destiny of human life. Our progress must also be ceaseless and constant.

Our progress, then, must have *thoroughness* and *constancy :* there must be a steady progress of the whole life. This is the soul of religion : unity and consistency form its essential characteristic. Whether religion signifies the bond that binds "man to man, and all to God," or the consecration of the body and soul to God, or the purification of the heart, or the discharge of our various duties, as different moralists define it, *consistency* is at once its vital and crowning principle. There is a unity in religion which, however our wishes may incline and theories dictate, can never be fractioned. Religion is not a thing of "shreds and patches." It is one indivisible unity which, if you seek to have it must be sought in its entirety and fulness. To be religious in the morning, but not in the evening; to be religious in seasons of prayer alone, but not in practical life; to be religious on special conditions of life, is to have the shadow of religion—not the reality. Religion is not confined to the heart or the intellect, it pervades the whole life and enters into every creek and corner of its varied details, illuminating and ennobling all its thoughts and feelings, its words and actions. When applied to life, it resembles—not a country composed of distinct

and separate principalities, but—a deep, full river flowing in one current towards the inexhaustible ocean. So flows the true religious life, integral and entire, in one unchanging direction towards the Illimitable Infinite Being. Every faculty, every sentiment, every deed is heavenward: the whole life faithfully and consistently glorifies the name of the Lord. In this unity and consistency lies the dignity of man; in this consists true MANHOOD. ]

Behold the length and breadth of the grand destiny of man: behold his heavenward mission! There is something within us, too, which impels us to this great mission. We feel an impulse in the deep places of the soul stirring us to ceaseless onward progress. We cannot resist it when it acts with full constitutional force. Led by this impulse, man moves forward against all the coutingencies of life and all the temptations thereof, encounters opposition with a heroic front, and endures hardship and misfortune with patience. If he slips from the path of his great vocation, he deeply grieves at his own folly, and severely rebukes his own will;—he dares not to impute the guilt to the Godhead. He deplores the abuse he has made of the nature

given him by Providence, but sees no inherent depravity, no original wickedness in it. If we closely examine the depths of our constitution, we shall, perforce, exclaim—How great is man; how celestial the nature planted in him by God! But in what, especially, does the greatness of man consist? Not certainly in his animal cravings and sensual propensities; not even in his emotions or thoughts howsoever exalted and deep,—but in his *personality*, in that freedom of his soul which spurns the offers of temptation, and vigorously opposes its own strength to the antagonism of the world—in that firm, undaunted energy of character which cannot be bent down by the weight of opposition. It is when circumstances tryingly gather around man; when clouds of malice and storms of opposition that can shake the stoutest heart, and send awe and despair into the veins of the most valiant hero, hover about his head; when misfortunes assail him from all sides:—it is in such circumstances that the nobility which abideth in him is manifested. Appeal to your own consciousness, and say, is there not within you a spark of God's almightiness—a power which will maintain its ground even were the whole world to join in hostile array against it—a principle which disdains to

enter into compromise with the things of this world even if life were at stake? Let us do justice to our nature by knowing what ingredients it is made of. Let us believe that we *have* a power to resist the temptations of the flesh and the oppositions of puny man, and that no pretext will avail to palliate or justify our abuse of the sacred prerogatives and powers vouchsafed to us by Providence. We must move heavenward, come what may. God must be glorified, even though it be by sacrificing life.

But, perchance, it will be said that we are indulging in a mere theory—describing an ideal, a fantasy of the imagination, which has no counterpart in reality. Does a man of this description actually live? In many a century no doubt, such a picture of manhood is to some extent realized. Inspired personages appear in the world now and then to show the grandeur of human nature and the exaltedness of which it is capable; to exhibit in actual life the heights of moral excellence. Their lives awaken our ambition and aspirations to emulate them, and serve to show we are capable of endless improvement. These men fought against time and circumstances, opposed the firmness of their

moral principles to the influences of the tempting world, and at last came off victorious. They warred against an opposing world for some master idea, and they resigned not the conflict till they made that idea triumphant—so hardy was their will so inflexibie their resolve. But ordinary humanity, it is contended, does not manifest anything like consistency; for mankind at large the theory we are discussing is a mere abstraction. Hence many have scouted it as an extreme of ethical dogmatism! They argue that the theory is too rigid for the nature of man. Humanity is prone to error. Man, though weak and infirm, is beset with countless temptations, and is thus exposed to a singularly unequal fight. And thus on the ground of the infirmity of human nature, the astounding doctrine is upreared, that instead of attempting to keep the whole law of God it is reasonable to follow that much of it only which appears adapted to our frail nature and our trying position in this world. They have manufactured a code of convenient religion and easy morality which they hawk in the streets. And for politic reasons this new-fangled code is said to be not man's law, but God's law adapted to nature of man—a mere *construction* put upon the pandect

of heaven, and thus, what is in reality a purely human invention and a manufacture of worldy wisdom obtains currency among mankind with the forged impress of the divinity. What a daring insult to the infinite wisdom of the Almighty !

Heaven's law is too sacred to need amendment at the hands of man : divine wisdom requires not the help of human reason to rectify its failings ! If to Heaven, and to Heaven alone, belongeth the power of determining what is right and what wrong, is it not impious arrogance for man to act as a critic on His enactments ? Conscience is the law of God engraven in golden characters on the tablet of the heart—it is REVELATION to us; and shall we prove our want of faith in that revelation by our practical infidelity ? No; when God says "This thou shalt do" let us be all submission. His law is not what we *may* obey, but what we *must* endeavour to obey—with all earnestness and promptness without reserve or compromise. If the strict observance of that law involve us in difficulties and perils ; if it jeopardize and our earthly interests, and even our life, we shall still sing glory unto the Lord.

The soul devoted to God displays a freedom

from the bondage of sin and the world, a self-denial which has learnt to forego all the fascinations and prospects of this life at the call of duty, an aspiration heavenward, and a ceaseless progress unto truth. God alone it seeks, and God alone is its joy. In a word the soul is dead unto the world and has been born anew in God. This is what we mean by REGENERATION. The regenerate man has liberated himself from the trammels of this world, and is above its joys and woes, its hopes and fears; all his desires and aspirations are in the Lord: all his energies and thoughts are consecrated to him: He is his life, his joy, his love. In such an attitude the soul has recognised God as the only object of adoration and love, the only master to be served and has consequently come away from all the idols which the world worships. It is this idol-worship that forms the great barrier to regeneration—the obstacles in the way of man's destiny. We have been commanded to serve the One True God and make Him the sole aim of our life. This is Theism. But if, instead of consecrating the whole life to Him we serve the world and pursue its temptations, we are guilty of idolatry. That alone is not idolatry which worships stocks and stones, things of clay, and beasts and fowls, and identifies them with the

very God who created them all. There is a *spiritual* idolatry which makes man idolize the passions of the heart and the fleeting felicities of the world. If the worship of the gods and goddesses of Hindu or Egyptian mythology be condemned as idolatry, is not the worship of Anger and Pride, Wealth and Fame, liable to the same charge? Are not the covetous, the arrogant, and the revengeful idolaters in the strict sense of the term? Are they not idolaters who worship the opinions of family and friends, and for their empty applause transgress their duty to God? If the worship of aught other than the True God is idolatry, deos not worldliness or mammon worship fall within its range? There are many who, though they pretend to be no idolaters are yet in heart the greatest idolaters. To overthrow all kinds of idolatry is the object of Brahmoism. It demands the soul's separation from all idols, within and without, material and spiritual, and its entire obedience and homage to the One True God.

Behold man a Covenanter! We have already viewed him as a Missionary sent to this world for the fulfilment of a great mission; he now appears before us as a Covenanter. He has entered into a

sacred covenant with God, and he is bound to fulfil it. His heart and soul, mind and body, have all been surrendered, all that he possesses has been laid at the feet of his Maker; and never can he swerve from His will. To the Lord he has sold himself and his all; and as the Lord biddeth so must he work and move. In all matters he refers to God to know His will, and without scruple he acts accordingly, regardless of all consequences. Like the needle, he turns always to his God; his eyes are fixed on the Covenant. He goes to no place, resorts to no company, enters into no conference, embarks on no undertaking, to which his master doth not direct him. His studies and meditations, his social intercourse and domestic pursuits, his monetary speculations and his patriotic movements, are all regulated and ordered by Him to whom he has given his all. Would you urge that such a covenant is purely chimerical? I do most emphatically assure you that you, one and all, have signed a covenant with God as soon as reason first dawned upon you and enabled you to distinguish between right and wrong. No argument is needed to convince us that we are all bound by the holy ties of moral obligation to serve our God. The voice of concience is clear, that for Him all sacrifice must be made, and that Him

alone should we strive to glorify. To glorify His name is the one great and common object of all our pursuits and this binds together in one consistent whole the countless varieties of our thoughts and deeds. One path only is open before us—that of endless progress,—and that we must perforce follow with constancy and faithfulness, if the sacred name of man we aspire to be entiled to, if his legitimate mission we are ambitions of acomplishing. Such is the life of a Covenanter with God.

You have seen man as a Missionary and then as Covenanter: view him again, and he appears as a Warrior! Truly man is a soldier in the great battle-field of life. There is man armed with all his faculties and sentiments in the midst of unnumbered foes. They attack him from before and behind and from all sides they discharge their deadly weapons against him. All this not withstanding, he stands firm and unmoved. Full of unconquerable enthusiasm, and holding the banner of truth in his hands, he repels the stoutest attacks of his multitudinous foes. Truth is his watchword; his armour is his strong faith that truth will triumph. He does not think of his family or the riches he has left behind him. He

has consigned his all to the care of the Lord, and betaken himself to a soldier's life. And when he fights, neither domestic considerations, nor any worldly interest, can induce him back, nor lead him astray. He is bent on his enterprize, and in that he is absorbed; for that he is prepared to sacrifice all personal ease, endure all hardships and agonies. His ambition and energies are all enlisted in the cause of truth.

Brethren, you have observed the true nature of man. You have viewed him as a Missionary, as a Covenanter and as a Soldier. Stupendous responsibilities stand upon man's shoulders;—like a Soldier, must he be incessantly active and watchful; like a Covenanter, must he be faithful and strict; as a Missionary, he must be ever mindful of the great work for which he is accountable. Man must be zealous and enthusiastic. His religion is fiery; it burns up in one blaze the allurements and oppositions of the world. Enthusiasm is the soul of success. Without it our great destiny can never be fulfilled. It is this which so fastens our hearts to the great work for which we are accountable to God that it at once liberates us from all idle fears, low aims, love of the world, and craving after perishable gain.

I do not say—Forthwith abandon family and friends, and pine away your days in solitude, in mortifications and sufferings. The main principle for which I contend is, that,—whether in prosperity or adversity, whether rich or poor, whether surrounded by family and friends, or bereft of all earthly companions and relations,—you must make God the sole object of your life : godliness must be intertwined with all your speculations and pursuits.

You have heard me throughtout with unflagging attention and patience, and you have manifested and appreciation of the solemn responsiblities which lie on you. Tell me, then, that you have bound up your best resolves to consistently follow the law of God, and to serve Him as your only master. With His help practically apply the doctrine of human destiny to the cause of your country. The key of India's amelioration lies in your hands ; and the more you attend to your own destiny, and apply the principle of consistent virtue to all the avocatious and relationships of life, the more will you promote the real prosperity and greatness o your country. What prodigious havoc are hypocrisy and inconsistency perpetrating around us ! Suffering India, in piteous eton,

is loudly remonstrating against these accursed evils. Her social, intellectual, and moral advancement depends upon you. As the rising generation of your country, you have a power, which others have not, of raising it in the scale of nations; then neglect not to consecrate all your energies, now that they are in the bloom of manhood, to the cause of patriotism and charity. Fellow-countrymen! do you not feel deeply your responsibility—your solemn duties to yourselves, to your country and to your God? If so, gird up your loins, and, "heart within and God overhead," embark on the great enterprize of your mission. You must have *enthusiasm*, I again repeat. It will work a marvellous change in you and inspire you with superhuman strength. Your tongues shall speak eloquence, and your eyes shall flash forth fire; your hands shall become strong and inflexible as adamant in the service of man and God. Your enemies will stand in reverential deference before you, and difficulties of Alpine stupendousness will melt away into nothingness. An enthusiasm like this will convert "poor men's cottages into princes' palaces" and make "each petty artery in the body as hardy as the Nemean lion's nerve." It will make you richer than the richest, and mighter than the mightiest potentate.

And thus as you march, valiant warriors! the world will tremble beneath your feet, and blessedness everlasting will be showered upon you from heaven; your family and your country, yea, all mankind will enjoy the harvests which your holy labours will yield.

**23 January, 1862.** On the occasion of the thirty-second anniversary of the foundation of the Brahma Samaj Keshav delivered a significant address in Bengali the purport of which may be summed up thus:—In spite of lack of organisation and effort the religion of the Brahma Samaj has made remarkable progress. Its light is scattering the darkness of ignorance, and love overcoming antagonism and strife. Blessed is Ram Mohun who first sowed the seed of this religion; blessed is Bengal where this religion found its first home. Truth is spreading far and wide in this land; and England and America, where erroneous religious views still hold sway, are receiving the truths of Brahmoism. This religion will unite the East and the West, the North and the South. Brethren, shed your indolence and apathy and by propagating the name of the Lord, revivify the drooping spirits of men.

Keshav brought his wife from her father's house to the house of Devendra Nath to join in the anniversary celebrations—a bold and unprecedented step considering the custom and ideas of the time.

About this time the title of *Brahmananda* (rejoicer in God) was conferred on Keshav by Devendra Nath Tagore.

**30 January, 1862.** The ceremony of *namakarna* (naming) of Babu Amrita Lal Bose's son was the first occasion in which a non-Brahmin (Keshav) officiated.

**13 April, 1862. Age 25.** On the Bengali New Year's Day Keshav was installed as *acharya* (minister) of the Brahma Samaj by Debendra Nath, the President of the communion. The ceremonies were of unique and unprecedented grandeur. Keshav was formally initiated into the duties of the Minister, an appointment regarded by him as most sacred and Divinely given to which he faithfully clung all his life.

The installation ceremony was marred by an unfortunate incident which however proved fruitful in the sequel. He intended to take his wife

from his own home to the house of Devendra Nath. His guardians and other elders strongly objected to the step. Keshav bore down all opposition and carried out his purpose. The result was that he was forbidden to re-enter his ancestral habitation. Devendra Nath most cordially invited Keshav to live in his house as long as he liked; Keshav accepted the invitation, staying there with his wife for several months. Hence forward the wives of Brahmos began to be recognised as a factor in the community; means began to be devised for their higher education, improvement and welfare. Keshav wrote a few well-chosen precepts under the heading *Streer prati upadesh* (precepts to the wife.)

While Keshav was an exile from home, a most obstinate and painful scrofulous disease attacked him, and for months to-gether he was bed-ridden. He bore the miseries with stoical fortitude. There were about a dozen operations, and Keshav always presented the same spirit of indifference to pain not allowing even a moan or sigh to escape his lips. Domestic reasons and other circumstances of a

legal nature made it desirable that he should remove to lodgings near the family home. Devendra Nath was unwilling to let Keshav depart, but in the end consented, and provided every necessity and comfort required by Keshav in his humble quarters. By the end of the year (1862) Keshav recovered from illness; the financial disputes with his uncle terminated, and he was taken back into the family mansion; his sufferings and fortitude secured the sympathy and admiration of his relatives.

**August, 1862.** The first inter-caste marriage took place in the community.

**October 1862.** Keshav established the Calcutta College with a view to provide for a better system of education than was available in the few existing institutions. He never believed in combining theological teaching with ordinary education; he thought it sufficient to teach the youthful mind the elements of morality and simple natural religion. He was a most staunch believer in early moral training, and the power of example exercised by good and spiritually-minded teachers. This

institution continued for five or six years, till it had to be broken up for want of support.

**November. 1862.** Keshav organised relief during an epidemic fever in Bengal.

**December. 1862.** He proposed the establishment of a theological institution for the training of Brahma missionaries.

**19 Decbr., 1862.** His first child, a son, was born whose *jatakarma* ceremony was performed on 11th January 1863.

**21 Febry., 1863.** At the Bhawanipur (Calcutta) Brahma Samaj Keshav lectured on—

## SOCIAL REFORMATION IN INDIA.

In the present transition age of Hindu society it behoves all who are interested in India's welfare seriously to observe the signs and tendencies of the age, and suggest and adopt such measures as may tend to establish a pure system of social and domestic economy on the principles of true religion. That a revolution of great magnitude awaits us, ordinary sagacity may predict. At such a time, our attention and energies cannot be better directed than towards establishing safe-guards of national morality and social peace, that society

may be spared the evils of dangerous innovations, and good may ultimately arise out of the present state of things ; else, in the impending revolution, the best interests of the country will be jeopardized, and the most disastrous consequences will ensue. It is our duty, therefore, to take proper measures now, that we may enable her to steer clear of obstacles, and eventually enter the harbour of peace and prosperity. Let us, as the representatives of Young India, take lessons from the premonitory symptons of revolution and do all that lies in our power, individually and collectively to turn the course of events towards truth: let us encourage what is good to the utmost extent of our power, nip growing evils in the bud, foster useful institutions and community of feelings and thus avert a catastrophe, which, otherwise the present crisis will assuredly bring on.

Let us see how the enlightened among the rising generation stand at present in relation to social reformation and how the influences of the education which they have received affect the cause of the country. Young Bengal may be said to consist of four sections or parties, distinct in their character and tendencies :—(I) the Scep-

tical; (2) the Speculative; (3) the Ultra; and (4) the Moderate. The Sceptical Party is composed of those who are lost to religion, and have therefore no spiritual anxiety for the welfare of others. True it is, that through impulse or feeling, these men often promote useful works, and confer incalculable good on their country; but the want of a steady religious principle debars their access to the confidence of the people at large. Those who want a sense of moral obligation are doubtless thoroughly incapacitated from taking part in the social administration of the country, in consequence of the high responsibilities which attach to it. For our present purpose the Sceptical class may be altogether set aside. Next in order stands the Speculative Party. Excellent in its own spere of thought and speculation, it lies at a considerable distance from practical reformation. Its motto is "mere prattle without practice": it loses all its glory and energy in magniloquent speeches and pompous essays on topics of national importance and interest. It observes with the keen eyes of logic, the main principles of moral and social reformation, believes them without the shadow of a doubt, but fails always, for want of moral heroism, to act up to them. It carries thought to the deepest principles and through the-

most recondite processes of speculation; but its hands are chained to inaction, and its soul to cowardice. Hence, for practical purposes, it is to a great extent useless. We now come to the third or Ultra Party. This is composed of those whose minds are or seem to be intensely interested in their country's good, and who are always clamorous for reforms. In the frenzy of over-patriotic ardour, they leap beyond the bounds of discretion, and advocate measures of a rather impracticable or impolitic character. They carry themselves forward in imagination a hundred years hence, and zealously discuss the means of immediately bringing about that state of things which will take a hundred years to realize. Their motto is "Build Rome in a day." They would yield to no alternative between *nothing* and *too much*. In point of fact, however, they are hardly an inch in advance of those whose apathy they always condemn, and they succumb to those difficulties and oppositions which they do not foresee and are not fit to cope with. Want of discretion and dispassionate judgment makes them advocates of dangerous measures, which a true reformer sedulously tries to avoid. The last is the Moderate Party. Free from sceptical recklessness and the obnoxious extremes of the other

parties, disposed neither to act the hypocrite's part by unconscientious compromises, nor to lose benevolence in over-zeal, the Moderates are best fitted to take the lead in social reformation. The very fact that they possess a steady religious principle and a strong sense of moral obligation, affords the best proof that the task of regulating the social life of a large population belongs to them; on the other hand, their moderation is the most reliable guarantee that in discharging their duties they will avoid extremes, blend courage with discretion, and enthusiasm with love, and steer clear of rashness and precipitate zeal on the one side, and cowardice and compromise on the other. This party is indentical with the Brahmo Somaj.

The Brahmo Somaj, since its establishment by Ram Mohun Roy, chiefly laboured to draw away the Hindu mind from superstitious beliefs and to establish its faith in the truths of theism. Its illustrious founder directed his mind and energies to the propagation among his countrymen of the worship of One True God, and this continued to be the principal object of the Brahmos for a long time; hence it is that the early history of the Somaj presents a scene of theological controversy. It has since widened its sphere of action and may

be now indentified with an institution of varied usefulness, having comprehensive, catholic, and practical objects in view. Whoever glances at the present state of the Somaj cannot fail to be impressed with its connection with various movements of reformation,—moral, social, educational, and domestic.

It may not be difficult to account for this. So soon as a belief in the truths of the pure creed is secured by dispelling doubts and clearing off prejudices, the necessity arises for applying those truths practically to the multifarious business of every day life and the various relationships with which man is beset as a creature of society. Hence it is that when the Somaj came to find that though its creed had become a religion of belief and weekly service, it had failed to become the religion of everyday life, it instantaneously directed all its energies to supply this deficiency and to acquire a firm footing in the life of the nation. The Somaj stands before us now not alone as a Church for periodical service, but as the leading body of social reformation in India.

Let us proceed to investigate and discuss the principles upon which its attempts at social reformation are based. The mission of the Somaj is essen-

tially a religious one. Hence social reformation must based upon be religion. It is true that the reformation of social customs and usages may, to a great but it is extent, be accomplished independently of religion ; not true that social reformation can be thorough and complete without religious advance ment. Religion, by improving the mind and investing conscience with supreme authority, lays the axe at the very root of corruption, whether in the individual character or in the institutions of society. It is futile to attempt to reform Society thoroughly so long as prejudices lie deep in the heart of the nation. Social reformation must therefore be preceded by and based upon religious reformation. This has been adopted by the Somaj as the mainspring of all measures of social reform. The Hindu meets his religion at every turn. In eating, drinking, moving, sitting, standing he is to adhere to sacred rules, to depart from which is sin and impiety. Under such circumstances, how is it possible to overthrow all the social evils of Hinduism, when faith, in its authority, is suffered to reign undisturbed in the heart ? The Somaj does not seek to destroy caste as an institution distinct from Hinduism, by setting up a purely secular movement to oppose its laws and principles. It seeks to establish the equality of man on religious grounds,

and thus indirectly abolish caste distinctions. It wages a purely religious war with all evils, theological and social.

I now proceed to treat of the second principle of social reformation, viz., the necessity of securing positive reforms by making the destructive and constructive agencies work together. Reformation etymologically viewed, signifies forming anew. Every reformer should, should therefore, not only destroy absurd and corrupt institutions, but build up positive institutions of undoubted usefulness and purity. It is certainly easier in the nature of things to demolish than to build an institution, and hence is it that during the period of revolutions the number of destructives exceeds by far that of constructives. We have amongst our countrymen many hundreds of those whose cry is down with this, away with that, but few who deliberately seek to displace what is false and injurious by what is good and beneficial. The thorough reformation of native society is the object of the Brahmo Somaj. It proposes not merely to destroy the superstitious foundation and all superstitious appendages of Hindu society, but likewise to give it a reorganisation upon the basis of pure faith, and adorn it

with useful institutions. In regard to caste, for example, the destructives represent it to their minds as a horrid institution apart from Hinduism and direct their attention and energy to its abolition. Let members of different castes promiscuously dine in public, let them subscribe their names to a covenant and pledge themselves inviolably to ignore the distinctions of caste in all that they do; such is their plan of operation. The constructive policy is—bring all men within the bosom of one church, under the feet of One True God, the universal father of all: community of interests and feelings will keep up social fellowship, and caste will naturally perish in the uncongenial atmosphere of religious brotherhood,—destroy caste but construct brotherhood.

The third rule of social reformation is to harmonize independence and authority. The student of history need not be told how the war between independence and authority has been carried on for centuries. To harmonize independence and authority ought to be the object of every reformer. It is therefore our duty in legislating for the social administration of a country, to institute a system of salutary restraint which will prove a safe-guard against license in matters in

which conscience demands absolute subjection, and at the same time withhold from encroaching upon the freedom of the people in matters of taste and judgment.

The fourth and last principle I have to describe is the union of courage and deliberation. Courage without due deliberation degenerates into rashness; deliberation without courage is synonymous with weakness and cowardice. We must neither rush impetuously into dangerous experiments of social innovations nor must we yield ourselves wholly to the cold calculating policy of the time-server. Before you take any step aginst the usages of your country, you should seriously consider its expediency; you should exercise discretion in determining the season and place of action and in the choice of agents, and you must shape your course in such a way that you may neither miss your object nor give unnecessary offence to those around you.

I proceed to describe and discuss those domestic and social ceremonies which may be adopted by the reforming party. I apprehand many here present will be startled by the bare mention of the word ceremony. Why should

Brahmos, it may be asked, adopt any ceremony at all: should they not avoid even the semblance of superstition? This question will be fully considered in its proper place. I shall at present draw your attention to the true nature of these ceremonies. These ceremonies are six in number: (1) Jatkarma, (2) Namkaran, (3) Upanayan and Dharmadiksha, (4) Bibaha, (5) Anteshtikrea, (6) Sradha. The first denotes the festival celebrated on the occasion of the birth of a child, and consists chiefly of thanks-giving to God for that blessing. The second means nomination or giving the child a name, similar to christening among Christians. The third signifies religious indoctrination. The fourth is marriage. The fifth signifies funeral ceremony. The last means the expression of respect for the memory of deceased relatives or friends.

Of the six ceremonies of social life, the second is of little importance as it consists in merely fixing a certain name for the new born child. The first and the sixth are spontaneous manifestations of natural feelings of the heart. The third, fourth and fifth are the most important and solemn ceremonies of life. To give a child a name, though not important, is certainly

necessary. Birth-festival and Sradha are outpourings of the heart. Their manifestations may be dissimilar in different cases so far as the form is concerned.

But the three ceremonies, Subscription Marriage and Funeral rites must be regarded as necessary institutions of Society, and require considerable amount of solemnity in form proportionate to their moral significance. They partake of both religion and custom, and involve the interests of Church and Society as well as of individuals. They are of religious importance and of national importance, and therefore unlike the other ceremonies, should be left as little as possible to individual judgments, or the mere sentiments and predilections of the parties concerned. In reference to these, Society, as a corporate body, has a ruling authority and to that each individual member should yield. That authority is certainly not identical with the supreme authority of conscience; nevertheless for private and public morality's sake it should be obeyed. In the momentous matter of matrimonial union, little choice can be given to the individuals; the form must be the same in all cases, minor matters of course excepted. Followers of the same religion must

marry according to a fixed formula prescribed by the church. So also in regard to Subscription and Funeral ceremony, the necessity of a fixed ritual is incontestable. Although it is true that religion, whether in the individual or in a community, is not to be sought in external forms, but in the convictions and acknowledgments of the heart, yet it must be admitted that some form should be prescribed in accordance with which youths, after receiving due knowledge of religious truths, are to be admitted with solemnity into the True Church and made to understand the great responsibilities to be undertaken in connection with it, in such a manner that there may be an abiding struggle in life to prove true to the vows which they may then take. Funeral rites are no doubt necessary. We must discharge our last duties to the deceased ; we must forego levity and mirth and all frivolous pursuits, and adapt our external life to the deep sorrow of our hearts ; it behoves us also not to allow the solemn occasion of the final departure of the souls of those whom we loved or respected, without taking effective moral lessons from it for the guidance of our souls, so long as we may have to sojourn in this world of temptation and sin. Hence it becomes absolutely necessary to prescribe certain funeral rites

to be observed on the demise of friends and relatives by their survivors.

Having shown you how far these ceremonies are necessary and what is the respective amount of social importance attached to each, I now proceed to inquire how far they are morally obligatory, how far the question of duty is involved in them. This is the great question which is being agitated with much force at the present day in our community. Some even have gone so far as to believe that the introduction of Anusthans [ceremonies] is but the revival of idolatry and superstition. In order to solve this vexed question it is necessary to remember the material difference which exists between form and essence in religion, and the connection which they have with our sense of duty. Each of the ceremonies under review is but an application of religion to the affairs of social and domestic life. This is the essence of the ceremonies and has a moral import. But this application is external and necessarily involves some amount of form which should not be confounded with the essence. To be grateful to God for every temporal blessing is a duty, and carries with it the weight of moral obligation; but the form in which and the accompaniment

with which that gratitude is displayed cannot be morally binding but constitute the peculiar province of each man's individual judgment and taste. Brahmoism holds that only to be obligatory and binding which has the sanction of conscience, all the rest it leaves to the free judgment of every individual. This is the grand difference between it and idolatry, which exacts religious conformity even with the non-essential matters of form. These have no connection whatever with religion and should be left to the discretion, taste and convenience of individuals. To issue positive and inviolable decrees in these matters would be to victimise the conscience of the people at the shrine of idolatry. It is now clear, I trust, that the reformed ceremonies denote essentially the fulfilment of certain domestic and social duties, and carry with them the sanction of religion and morality. But there is another standpoint from which we many observe their moral bearing on society. At the present time, when so many and varied sweeping innovations and revolutions calculated only to destroy prejudices and pernicious usages and customs are in progress around us, any movement for positive reforms must be warmly hailed by all interested in the social and moral welfare of India. Such

positive reforms are to be found in these ceremonies.

At such a time it behoves those to whom Providence has vouchsafed the light of Brahmoism to step forward, and by the influence of precept and example to promote such measures as may secure to our country the blessings of true reformation. Rest assured that the best foundation for the prosperity of a nation is pure faith, and that unless this is laid deep in its life, mere secular measures, however much they may tend to produce superficial refinement will fail to effect any substantial or lasting improvement. Whether it is social or educational or moral reformation that we seek, our efforts will meet with that partial success which attends all half-measures unless we base it on the enlightenment and expansion of the soul.

At a general meeting of the Brahma Samaj held about the end of December 1861, Keshav had proposed (1) the formation of a representative body of Brahmas living in Calcutta and outside with a view to bring the members of the Samaj into closer contact with one another, and (2) the establisment of an institution for the training of Brahmy missionaries.

1863. The Brahma Bandhu Sabha ( in a way the first Brahma Samaj for all India ) was started with the above objects in view. It was at a meeting of this Sabha that Devendra Nath gave his discourse on his "Twenty-five years' experience in the Brahma Samaj". This Sabha comprised three sections—the first concerned with religious discoures, the second with the publication of books and pamphlets, and the third with the education of women.

The controversy with Christian missionaries which started at Krishnagar during Keshav's mission activities there was carried over to Calcutta where the Rev. Lal Behari Day attacked the Brahma Samaj and its leaders in his weekly journal, *The Indian Reformer.*

18 April, 1865.

Mr. Day read a paper on "Brahma Intuitions" which contained more ridicule than reason. Keshav felt called upon to reply and he delivered his well-known lecture on—

## THE BRAHMO SAMAJ VINDICATED.

A few days ago a lecture was delivered, in the Hall of the General Assembly's Institution, by the Revd. Lal Behari Day, on "The Calcutta Brahmo Samaj." The Lecturer levelled a series of unjustifiable and groundless charges against the Samaj, attempting more to drown it with a torrent of ridicule, wit and sarcasm than to argue away its doctrines in a serious and argumentative style. The charges brought against the Brahmo Samaj may be arranged under three heads, viz :—

*First*···Brahmoism is a religion of fluctuating opinions, and therefore, no religion at all.

*Second*—Common Sense is not sufficient to give man saving knowledge of God.

*Third*—The Brahmic theory of Atonement is absurd and pernicious.

I have in my hand a copy of *The Indian Reformer*, in which I find reproduced the first portion of the lecture. The Lecturer thus argues:—

"Now, Gentlemen, I trust I shall be the last person in the world to find fault with a man for conscientiously changing his opinion. But if the man were to change his opinions periodically as he changes his *chapkan* or his *dhutee*; were the fluctuations of his opinions to keep time with the phases of the moon, I should be justified in saying of that man, that he had no fixed principles at all. What are we to think of men who are not agreed among themselves as to the very foundations of their faith ?—Who make organic changes in their religious principles in the course of every five years ?—and modify their theological belief according to the fashion of every varying hour. Can you have confidence in such men ? Such religious weather-cocks do not suit me. A religion of fluctuating opinions is no religion at all."

That changes have taken place in the Brahmo Samaj is a matter that nobody gainsays. The question is not whether any change did take place, but what was the spirit in which the change was undergone. In reviewing the history of the Samaj, we find that in the earlier times the Vedas were held as the divine and infallible guide in matters of religion, and all Vedic doctrines received at least tacit acquiescence. In the succeeding

age, we find the basis of Brahmoism to be the Revelation of nature. The particulars of the transition may be briefly related. Babu Devendra Nath Tagore one day accidentally fell in with a stray leaf of a Sanskrit book (*the Ishopanishad*). He naturally felt anxious to know what it was, but alas! the charcters were unintelligible to him as he was a stanger to Sanskrit literature. He therefore had recourse to a Pandit and got the passage explained by him; he was so much impressed with its excellence that he at once applied himself to the study of Sanskrit. How precious must that volume be, he said within himself, of which this passage is but a fragment! He was indefatigable in his studies and researches, and he make considerable progress, his heart anticipating the greatest joy, and his enthusiam doubled up to the straining point, for the time was approaching when he should be able to dip into that ocean of saving truth, a few drops of whose water had done him so much good. The more he read the greater was the progress of his soul in truth and piety. With a view to spread a knowledge of the theology of the Vedas among his countrymen, he sent four Pundits to Benares to be initiated in the Vedas, in order that they might disseminate far and wide that saving knowledge

of the One True God which had given him almost a new life. But alas ! little did he know of what was to come ; little did he know what that portion of the Vedas was which he had not yet explored ! His anticipations were frustrated, and instead of joy came bitterness and disappoiotment ! The return of the Pundits and his subsequent investigations with their aid convinced him of the errors of the Vedic system. There was a terrible strife—the strife of conscience against associations of mind and place ; duty against prepossessions ; truth against cherished convictions. But conscience triumphed over all—the Vedas were thrown overboard by Babu Devendra Nath Tagore; and the Brahmo Samaj bade ferewell to Vedantism. Genltemen, would you call this fluctuation ? or would you not rather say that this indeed is a triumph of conscieuce, and conscience alone—a victory over error and darkness effected by candid enquiry and a love of truth ? This change was due more to the closer study of the Vedas themselves by Babu Devendra Nath Tagore than to the influence of the anti-Christian works of occidental Deists, as has been said: for though the Vedas were no longer regarded as the basis of Brahmoism, and their errors and absurdities were abjured, the good things in

the superstructure were retained and continue to this day; and the *Brahmo Dharma* book of the present day contains the truths of the Vedanta with natural reason for their basis.

I ask you, Gentlemen, whether the charge of fluctuation brought against the Brahmo Samaj by the Lecturer does not apply with full force to the history of Christianity, and, if so, whether, on that ground Christianity is to be called "no religion"? Heresies and schisms and sects unworthy of the name of Christianity—aye, many of them abominable—triumphed in the very centre of Christendom. If the past history of Brahmoism is to be brought as an argument condemnatory of its pure character to-day, then indeed might we bring forward the early history of Christianity to condemn Christianity, because, in past ages, it underwent changes. doctrinal and practical, against reason and common sense—changes even in the essential articles of faith. Far from observing uniformity, we behold innumerable sects, such as the Gnostics, the Adamites, the Quakers, the Protestants, the Roman Catholics, the Trinitarians. &c.—we see *countless changes*; so that it cannot be admitted that Christianity has continued unchanged amid political,

has been pulverized into numerous sects maintaining different and sometimes contradictory opinions, humanity, on the whole, has been progressing towards a system of catholic philosophy. The only true explanation which may be given of the endless variations and wide diversities of philosophical theories lies in the fact that philosophy was not originally established on first truths. Sensationalism, Idealism, Scepticism, and Mysticism promulgated their contending doctrines and landed in absurdities in consequence of their departure from Intuition. They rambled this way and that way in quest of truth, and though some truth there was in each, yet differences there were many, for they recognised not the common truths of mind, on the platform of which alone catholic philosophy can be upreared.

In vindicating the doctrine of Intuition, I am far from insinuating that the views of the philosophers who uphold it exactly tally with our own. This much I desire to assert, that in some form, under some name, and to some extent, Intuition has been admitted to be a fact of consciousness by almost all distinguished thinkers. Different names have been given to it, such as spontaneous reason, practical reason, *a priori* cognitions,

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common sense, first truths, corresponding with the particular characteristics of Intuition, specially recognised by the philosophers who gave those names, such as spontaneity, catholicity, originality &c. But such differences of opinion in regard to name are immaterial so long as the existence of Intuition is admitted.

The doctrine of common sense is, therefore not only true philosophy but catholic philosophy; it is not the peculiar doctrine of a particular sect, but the unity of philosophic truths, a code of universal beliefs supported by the testimony of consciousness. Unassailable, then, is that system of religion which stands upon first truths. To say that our church rests upon Intuition is to say that it rests upon an immovable rock which the wind of opinion can not shake, the blast of controversy can not demolish. For, if the Intuitions are veritable facts of consciousness, the same must be predicated of religious Intuitions. The religious truths which constitute the foundation of a Theist's creed, in as much as they are intuitive, challenge the unquestioning assent of every philosophical mind; they carry in them the authority of nature and the stamp of a Divine Author. It has been falsely inferred from the fact of our attaching so

Good and Holy, and not a deceiver, else every word of that book might be suspected to be a lie and a snare. Thus the very premises from which the Christians syllogistically draw out their conclusions, viz., that the Bible is the Word of God, and whatever it says should be accepted as truth unto salvation,—involve the ideas of a Living God, a God of Intelligence, Goodness and Holiness. Thus even Christianity pre-supposes Intuition. It is also historically certain that intuitive knowledge of God existed long before the birth of Jesus, long before the Bible came into existence; that pious men in early ages uttered truths which meet with response in the Natural Religion of the present age.

True it is, that to Christianity we are, to some extent, indebted for our theology; but this admission does not go to make the Bible the source from which our religious ideas have been borrowed. The simple truth is that Christianity is chronologically, but not psychologically, anterior to Brahmoism. The numerous stages of development through which humanity advances are but concatenated links in the chain of progress: the past influences the present, and the present the future. We see to-day the issue of the various

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events which transpired yesterday, and the seed of the harvest which will be reaped to-morrow. The accumulated learning and experiences of the past are at our service and must guide the world now and hereafter. Hence it is that not only the Brahmo Samaj, but all religious movements of the present age, are immediately or remotely owing to Christianity and all churches that preceded it. It is impossible for the present age to disclaim all connection with or dependence upon the past : it is impossibe for us to deny the strong claims which Christianity has upon our gratitude. Honour, all honour to Christ Jesus for paving the way to civilization;—for the salutary influences of his precepts on the world !—not for the origination of the truths of Brahmoism. Christianity has prepared the world for the Brahmo Samaj, but has not given birth to Brahmoism.

I now proceed to consider the arguments advanced against our Theory of Atonement and salvation. The Lecturer gave a rather imperfect picture of Brahmic repentance. We do believe that repentance is atonement, but that repentance is not the lip-repentance he speaks of. What is repentance ? Is it a mere confession of sin ?

It has been remarked that the religion of the Brahmos does not teach them to abhor sin. This is a mere assumption. The Brahmos regard sin as an abomination, and detest it from the bottom of their heart. They believe sin to be a violation of the law of the Holy God, a rebellion against the authority of the Supreme moral Governor. Can the mind conceive anything more awful than ingratitude to the Beneficent Father, who is the Life of our life, Who supports us on His everlasting arms, Who clothes and feeds us with more than a father's care, with more than a mother's tenderness, and to whom we owe our body and mind and all the facilities we enjoy, and who, in spite of our disobedience, ever and anon offers us pardon and salvation, provided we sincerely repent and prayerfully come unto His feet ? How rigid are the injunctions of Brahmoism to turn away from the filthy path of vice, and consecrate the soul wholly and exclusively to truth and God !

Christian Brethren ! I humbly beseech you to look upon us in a brotherly spirit. We are all children of the common Father; love and goodwill should, therefore, prevail among us always. Whatever our religious opinions may be, we are certainly entitled to your sympathy and affection.

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Let scandal henceforth he gagged, let invective and vituperation be set aside as unworthy to take part in brotherly communications. Let us all love God as our Father, and man as our brother.

To Brahmos I desire to say—Brethren ! As worshippers of the God of Love, it is your duty to love all men as your brethren, and to make charity the ruling principle of your heart. Fling away arrogance and pride, and be humble and meek. Prayerfully rely upon the Lord of Salvation for without His aid your strength will be but as weakness, and the light of your knowledge as darkness. Pray to Him that He may be your light and life and strength. Accept truth wherever you may find it, and whosoever may give it to you, without prejudice and act up to it without compromise. In this age of reformation, endeavour to be reformers. Reform yourselves, your families and your neighbours; train up your children in the knowledge of God, and educate your wives and sisters. It will not do merely to electrify large meetings with eloquent speeches; no, each in his humble sphere must set a bright *example* for others to follow. If, thus, you earnestly and, conscientiously discharge your duties to yourselves and to your country, the time will soon come

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**August, 1864** Keshav helped in the consummation of the first intercaste marriage, the bride being a widow.

Another step in the progress of reform in the Brahma Samaj was the appointment in the ministry of two persons who had discarded the sacred thread. On matters of social reform widely divergent views were held in the Samaj at the time. Keshav was in favour of going ahead. Devendra Nath was rather conservative. He did not care to obstruct the former's innovations, but his feeling was that of secret uneasiness. There had always

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been a third party,—intelligent elderly men jealous of Keshav's ascendancy,—who, during his absence, worked powerfully upon the fears of Devendra Nath, persuading him to reconsider the relation of the Brahma Samaj on the subject of social reform. Finding that matters had taken an unfavourable turn, Keshav began to agitate on the propriety of establishing a Pratinidhi Sabha. (Society of Rrpresentatives) to take the opinions of all Brahma Samajes in the provinces on questions of importance. His tactics were suspected and the differences grew wider.

19 September 1864

Keshav delivered a lecture on "Know Thyself" in the Medical College Theatre. We learn, he said, from the life of Socrates, that self-knowledge gives self-control; from that comes self-dependence; which again induces renunciation.

4 October. 1864.

The prize-giving at the Calcutta College took place, when Keshav, reporting about the institution mentioned its special features, viz. (1) Study of Sanskrit (which, excepting the Sanskrit College, was not then

provided for at any other similar institution); (2) Instruction in health and hygiene; (3) Moral training.

October — The *Dharmatattva*, a Bengali fortnightly, was started by Keshav.

30 October. — A meeting of the representatives of the Brahma Samajes was held with Devendra Nath Tagore in the chair. The Pratinidhi Sabha was established with Devendra Nath and Keshav as President and Secretary respectively.

November. — The management of the Calcutta Brahma Samaj was taken charge of by Devendra Nath as trustee of the Samaj property, and the managing committee, with Keshav as secretary resigned. Keshav with his band thus parted from Devendra Nath so far as the secular side of the Samaj was concerned; but in matters spiritual and devotional they continued together for two years more.

23 January, 1865 — At the annual celebration of the foundation of the Brahma Samaj Keshav, in the course of the sermon, spoke on the universal aspect of Brahmoism. He said :—The Universe is our cathedral, God is our object of

worship, knowledge is our scripture, worship is our path of salvation, self-purification is our atonement, the world's saints are our leaders and teachers. Brahma Samaj is no sectarian body.

The Brahma Pratinidhi Sabha continued to hold meetings and formulate rules for the conduct of its affairs.

1 April, 1865. A special meeting of the Brahma Bandhu Sabha, conducted in English in deference to many European friends present, was held, the Proceedings comprising: (1) Prayer; (2) Readings from Hindu, Islamic and Christian Scriptures; (3) Reading from English translation of Maharshi Devendra Nath's Sermons; (4) Sermon by Keshav on *God the Creator and the Brotherhood of Man;* (5) Hymn—*Pope's Universal Prayer.*

1 July, 1865 A letter signed by Keshav and some members of his group was addressed to the Trustee and President, Devendra Nath Tagore, suggesting some changes in the conduct of the affairs of the Samaj, and, in case the suggestions were not acceptable, seeking his advice on the starting of a separate Brahma organisation.

5 July. Devendra Nath in reply stated his inability to accept the suggestions and consented to seperation.

Mahendra Nath Bose, one of Keshav's followers, sent a long letter for publication in the *Indian Mirror*, describing the growth and development of the Brahma Samaj, stating the causes of present dissensions, and suggesting the remedy. He wrote that Brahmoism was not for India alone, neither for the times when the Vedas were composed. The whole world was its home; it was the religion of mankind. Brahmoism views the Hindu, the Moslem, the Christian in the same light; the Vedas, the Bible, the Koran were held in equal regard.

The letter was not published, which raised the question of the proprietorship of the journal. Keshav claimed and secured it for his own.

In the Hall of the Calcutta College Keshav spoke on the Fight for Religious
23 July. Freedom and the Progress of the Brahma Samaj before a large and distinguished audience who were sympathetic and appreciative.

About this time Keshav published

## AN APPEAL TO YOUNG INDIA.

Fellow-countrymen and Friends,

I purpose to communicate to you a few thoughts and suggestions on your duties in the present critical period of the social history of India. I do not pretend to edify you. Mine is an humbler mission. I approach you as your servant—as one who would humbly serve his country and countrymen. Earnestly do I pray and trust you will accept my services,—and may Providence graciously vouchsafe to bless them to the good of my country !

India, our fatherland, is a great country, and is destined to occupy a very high place in the scale of nations. The age in which we live is also peculiarly important as marking the transition state of native society. Mighty revolutions are taking place on all sides. The spirit of Western enlightenment and civilisation is at work in the core of Hindu society. Its powerful influence has shaken the enormous fabric of Hinduism to its very foundations, and convulsed the very heart of the nation; and every sphere of native thought and occupation, intellectual, social, political, commercial and religious, is in a state of

violent fermentation. Can you stand as unconcerned spectators of this mighty revolutionary movement ? The whole scene is stirring, and imperatively calls upon us all to meet the crisis full in the face and do our duty manfully.

During this period of transition it is the duty of all who are interested in India's welfare to labour conscientiously to remove her wants, alleviate her sufferings, guard her against imminent perils and place her in the way of social, moral and religious advancement. Such an arduous and important task belongs specially to Young India—to the enlightened representatives of the rising generation. To you your country looks up for protection and prosperity. Do not then neglect her claims upon your sympathy. Let patriotism warm your hearts and quicken your energies, as education has expanded your understanding and enlarged your views. If your eyes have been opened to the actual condition of your mother counrty, and to the great duties you owe her, them flinging away selfish apathy and indifference apply yourselves with adequate vigour to her amelioration. You must admit the necessity of a thorough reformation of Hindu society.

How this great and urgent work may be

successfully achieved, and what are the special duties of Young India in connection with it,—these are the two practical questions which it is necessary to solve.

A firm sense of duty ought to be the basis of all reform movements. If in endeavouring to reform your country your object be merely to imitate foreign nations or introduce mere fashionable luxuries of civilization, or if you seek to abolish only some of the superficial evils of society and leave the more important ones intact with a view to avoid persecution; if you guage your work by the standard of your own convenience, or measure your movements according to the utilitarian principle of happiness, you will either miss your primary object wholly, or in rescuing society from one species of evil open the floodgates of new and perhaps greater evils. Those, therefore, who desire to fight the battle of reform must be first of all suitably armed and equipped with a strong and abiding sense of duty.

Secondly, those who desire to reform the country must first reform themselves. Let them live down error instead of merely attempting to cry down error.

Lastly, the paths of reformation are thorny, and therefore they who tread these paths must be prepared for the thorns; there is no royal road to reformation.

These are the three essential requisites of sound and successful reformation. Let us now consider the chief evils in Hindu society against which they should direct their special exertions.

There can be no doubt that the root of all evils which afflict Hindu society, that which constitutes the chief cause of its degradation is idolatry.

Next to idolatry is Caste. It has completely and hopelessly wrecked social unity, harmony, and happiness, and for centuries it has opposed all social progress. It makes civil distinctions inviolable, divine institutions, and in the name of Holy God sows perpetual discord and enmity among His children!

Thirdly, our Marriage Customs involve evils of great magnitude which urgently call for reform. They are not only repugnant to morality and reason, but constitute one of the powerful causes of the physical degeneracy of our nation.

Fourthly, the Zenana requires thorough reform.

Women's minds are powerful, powerful for propagating good as well as evil. Do what you will to promote reformation; so long as errors and prejudices lodge in their minds they shall be perpetuated from generation to generation.

Educated countrymen, here is a rough outline of your principal duties in connection with the reformation of your country. I know you will say it is an old stereotyped reform scheme. It is not intended, brethren, that you will grow wiser from perusal. I appeal to the conscience, not to the intellect of Young India. I offer no new theme for discussion or criticism, but a few simple well-known truths for action. If a few earnest souls at least be ready to do their duty fearlessly and conscientionsly, they will naturally co-operate with each other with cordial brotherly love, and may thus form eventually a powerful national reform alliance. Thus as individuals unite, may families co-work, may communities be formed, may Young Bengal and Young Bombay, Young Madras and Young Punjab combine; and may the circle gradually widen itself till it brings the whole nation within its embrace ! Then truth shall shine throughout the length and breadth of India and harmony reign among its vast population !

In the autumn of 1865 Keshav formed an Association of Brahma ladies, called the *Brahmica Samaj.*

October, 1865. Accompanied by Aghor Nath Gupta and Vijay Krishna Goswami, Keshav went on a missionary tour to East Bengal, and visited Faridpur, Dacca and Mymensingh. He stayed at Dacca for about a month giving religious discourses in the evening. On Sundays he conducted Divine Service at the Brahma Samajes in the town. Besides sermons, he delivered four lectures in English on *Faith Love, Revelation* and and *Catholicism.* He spoke in Bengali on the Catholicity of Brahmoism, and also on its Spirituality. These were his first extempore Bengali lectures.

Novembr, 1865 age 27 The journey in East Bengal was mostly by river; and it was in the first week of November, while travelling in a slow country—boat from Faridpur to Dacca that Keshav composed that priceless little tract, which "proves the frenzy to which his faith had risen even at that early age"—

# TRUE FAITH.

## Exhortation.

O ye who profess to be God's followers, establish your hearts in faith, lest in the day of trial ye be found wanting.

For temptations abound in the path of life, and storms and perils there are many, and whoso encountereth them without faith shall surely fall.

Neither your boasted wisdom nor goodness nor piety shall stand in the day of trial; these shall crumble even at the first shock.

For faith is the foundation whereupon these must stand, and if faith be wanting, shall not the house fall?

Therefore build your life on the rock of True Faith, and though roaring surges beat against it, it shall not give way.

## Faith in God.

Faith is direct vision; it beholdeth God and it beholdeth immortality.

It is no dogma of books, no tradition of venerable antiquity.

It relieth upon no evidence but the eye-sight, and will have no mediation.

It neither borroweth an idea of God from metaphysics nor a narrative of God from history.

It doth not bow its neck before a logical or historical deity.

It adoreth the ever-living and ever-present Reality.

The God of fath is the sublime I AM.

In time He is always *now*, in space alway *here*.

Hence faith has a short creed, which owns no pilgrimage to distant age or clime, for nearer than aught can be is God the immanent Spirit.

As outwardly in all objects so inwardly in the recesses of the heart faith beholdeth the living God.

The eyes close, and the inward kingdom revealeth God.

There in ineffable beautity He shineth as the Life of life; the dependent soul quickened by

mysterious animation worshippeth Him, and entereth into joyful communion with Him.

The eyes open, and all objects in external nature reveal the resplendent Spirit and breathe His presence.

East, west, north and south, He filleth all space.

The universe is God's vast cathedral, where nature both quick and inanimate chanteth hymns unto His glory in solemn music.

The soul roused by sympathy joineth the service and swelleth the chorus.

Thus within and without faith liveth always in the midst of blazing fire, the fire of God's presence.

It is a presence to be seen and felt, not learned or remembered.

It is a presence not to be put by, so prevading, so iterwoven with life and nature.

Verily Divine presence hath electricity; it quickeneth the heart and the nerves, and maketh the very hairs of the body stand erect.

Hence true worship is no ceremony or form in honour of a dead or distant deity, but the living homage of the soul unto the living and near God.

But the near is dear by nature's law.

And God is both living and loving.

Hence faith holds living and loving communion with Him who is dearer than life.

It establisheth a personal relation, even that between the son and the father.

It buildeth a domestic altar in the heart for the Author of the universe, and saith—*My* God, *My* Father.

The Thou of its prayers is as much a reality perceived by the spiritual eye as a personal God held in personal attachment.

The vividness of perception is equal to the warmth of the heart, for in faith knowledge and love, belief and trust are one.

## Faith in Immortality.

Faith liveth in anticipation.

The future is its dwelling house.

It fixes the foundations of life on the realities of the next world and eternity, not on the vanities of this world and time.

Verily the world is a toy-shop and time a running stream, and true wisdom shuns both.

The fool delighteth in toys and doth revel in vanities, but faith is not deceived thereby, it seeketh substance and reality.

It knoweth well that all is vanity and hollowness here, and never selleth its desires, hopes, and affections to temporal objects.

It is above all the fleeting phenomena of the world, above its joys and sorrows.

Earthly afflictions cannot torment it, nor can earthly sorceries fascinate it, for it is dead unto their influence.

Faith is a new creation.

It is the death of the flesh and the regenera-
of the spirit.

Hence it is dead to all the temptations and fears of this world, and is alive unto God and eternity.

It is ever encompassed by the realities of eternity, it firmly walketh on its solid ground, feedeth on its luxuriant harvests, and stretcheth its endless life on the lap of the Everlasting Spirit.

It liveth in and unto the next world, and careth solely for immortal life.

And so far as this little world is preparatory thereto, it engageth the serious thought of faith.

Thus where others purchase toys and dance in giddy merriment, faith gathereth discipline and provisions for immortality.

Its heart is in the vast kingdom beyond the grave, where it recognises its true home and its Father, and feels comforted.

The next world is to it not an abstract conception but a scene of homely realities.

Therein it feels domestic interest, its sweet and blessed home for ever.

How to render that home happy is its sole object and aim.

To dwell for ever in that home under the

guardianship of Infinite Mercy, free from sin, far from suffering and secure against death, is its only hope and prayer.

## Faith in the Moral Law.

When the heart is fixed on God and immortality and perceiveth its relation to both, it devoteth itself to the one and prepareth itself for the other.

Thus faith ever striveth after righteousness, for righteousness is the true service of God and the provision of immortality.

And as the law of righteousness is absolute and immutable even as the will of the Supreme Governor, faith upholdeth it in its integrity and fulness.

In all that it thinks and says and does, it is pledged to adhere to truth, all truth, and nothing but the truth.

And with the unswerving fidelity of a Covenanter it followeth in all circumstances that which is right and abjureth what is wrong.

It despiseth compromise and hateth fractional

religion which divideth its service between God and Mommon.

It serveth God as its only Master.

It never justifieth evil, whether great or small.

The least contact with iniquity is abomination and defilement in its sight.

It loveth purity and holiness, and abhorreth every form and manner of sin.

It strictly followeth in all things the high standard of God's moral law, and layeth up purity and righteousness with great care.

## Power.

Faith conquereth weakness, want and woe, for it findeth in God manifold power, sustenance, and joy.

It is the victory of the spirit over the flesh, of truth over the world.

Faith counteth the thought of weakness wickedness and the language of weakness an abomination.

*I cannot*—faith never uttereth that odious phrase; for betwixt the will and work, it findeth the path straight.

That it willeth that it doth, and never doubteth success.

Faith is a mighty giant whose nerves are of steel and whose eyes speak defiance.

It feareth no man and despiseth the threats and intimidations of the mighty.

Sovereigns quail before it, and from crowned heads it exacteth homage.

It prostrateth millions in open encounter and planteth God's banners before the cannon's flash.

It worketh wonders and achieveth impossibilities, and the world in amazement doth say—What manner of man is this who worketh these miracles ?

For faith is strong in the strength of the Almighty and hath invincible power.

## Resignation.

Faith is the promise of daily bread and its fulfilment.

Nature is its granary and the world its store-house of provisions.

Its habitation is in the regions of content and it knoweth no want.

Where others cry for food it mocketh privation and enjoyeth life with confidence.

It taketh no thought for the morrow and deemeth it scepticism to lay up provisions for the future.

For faith liveth in resignation and hath absolute trust in Providence.

It dwelleth secure under the kind care of that God who feedeth the fowls of the air and the beasts of the wilderness and the fishes of the sea and the trees which do grow without toil.

Confident and thoughtless even as they, faith careth not for food or raiment.

And as they are cheerful and glad though nought be in store, even so is faith albeit penniless and ragged.

**Joy.**

Faith rejoiceth in the All-Blissful God, findeth joy immeasurable in His service.

It is ever calm and is not ruffled by the fluctuations of fickle fortune.

It is the deep full ocean of peace and doth never ebb.

Though midnight gloom surrounds it, it enjoyeth within meridian shunshine.

With forbearance and resignation it bluntèth the edge of sorrow.

With hope and patience it converteth the bed of thorns into a bed of roses.

It is beyond the reach of penury, for its riches are the treasures of grace.

Even on death-bed it looketh bright and cheerful as an angel, and besetting clouds do but add to its beauty and glory.

## Self-Sacrifice.

Faith is the surrender of self to God.

It thinketh not what it shall eat or drink, but how it shall serve and glorify the Lord.

It sacrificeth self and the world on the altar of God, that it may say with wholeness of heart—I am Thine.

It selleth all it hath and followeth God, and reserveth nought for self.

It dedicateth its whole life, heart and soul, mind and body unto Him and saith—Not my will, but Thy will be done.

It thinketh not of joy or sorrow, but maketh duty its only concern and the divine will its sole aim.

But the maturity of faith is love, for love completeth the union which faith beginneth.

Then duty and desire harmonize,

Then the soul saith—I and my Father are one.

## Humility.

Iaith has no merit in its own eyes. It liveth more in the passivity of obedience than the activity of the will.

It acteth under extreme force of moral compulsion, which enfeebleth the sense of will.

It delighteth in resignation not egotism, in in prayer not self-sufficiency, in the Master's glory, not its own.

Faith is but the instrument of God in good works, and never ventures to think, *I* do.

Only the sins and short-comings are its own.

God is glorified in its godliness, but self convicted in its failings.

So likewise all the glory and all the praise for good works it invariably giveth unto the Lord.

But suffering and odium, tribulation and death it readily accepteth as its portion.

It boasteth not of the good that is done, but it feels mortified for what is not done.

It keepeth account only of its omissions and imperfections, its misdeeds and idleness.

Though it may do much good and bless untold nations and generations, it knoweth well the light is not its own and belongeth to the Sun of Holiness.

Such is its mysterious dependence upon the Master that humility is at once its criterion and ornament.

By it faith is known, in it lies its beauty.

## Wisdom.

Faith is true wisdom, which is noble and divine.

It loathes prudence, which is earthly and mean.

Prudence is the arithmetic of fools.

It weigheth consequences, counteth loss and gain, and measureth utility, but hath no regard for truth.

And as the wind tosseth the dry leaf, so do fear and shame lead the worldly-wise hither and thither.

They have no wisdom of their own, but traffic in other men's opinions, always using those in demand.

They are not their own selves, but other men's selves.

Having no principle to guide them, they turn with the wind and move along the tide.

A rude rustic is wiser than they, and a child can overturn the very foundations of their philosophy.

Deluded men! wise in their own conceit, they are but the slaves of fashion and popularity.

But faith never courteth popularity, nor doth it accommodate itself to fashion.

It is firm and unyielding, and is built on immovable principles.

Its wisdom is the wisdom of truth, which never varies though fire should become as cold as ice and the sun breathe darkness.

Faith has originality, freedom and self-reliance, and never deigneth to take lessons from the world.

It firmly walketh upon the counsels of conscience, which are the revelations of God.

## Progress.

Faith is perpetual progress heavenward.

It disdains the beaten track, it soars while others crawl.

It scorns the world's control and defies its command—Thus far shalt thou go.

God is its aim, it refuses to obey the law of limitation.

Progress is its life, to stop is to die.

The highest form of virtue doth not satisfy it, though it may contain the whole of the world's righteousness.

Above the highest it seeketh a higher still, and beneath the deepest it seeketh a deeper still.

## Singularity.

Faith is singular and moveth in its own ways, which are past finding out.

Geography cannot find its latitude and longitude.

Nor can arithmetic compute its age, nor history portray its true life.

Philosophy hideth its face in shame after vainly labouring to ascertain its why and wherefore.

Verily its actions are unintelligible to the world, and its life is a deep mystery.

Hence it is charged with idiocy and madness.

Its enthusiasm is indeed madness in the eye of the world, and all its movements are folly.

Faith is fool because it mocketh the idols which the world doth gravely worship and setteth equal value on gold and straw.

And faith is mad because it forsaketh the ways of the world, and with wild enthusiasm effecteth its peculiar purposes and maketh much mischief.

It hath no respect for custom and speaketh and acteth outright as it thinketh.

It findeth honour in slander and joy in privation, and it danceth in the midst of great tribulation.

It smileth where others weep, and it goeth into sack-cloth and mourning where others exult.

Faith has many eccentricities which the world must needs deride.

But these eccentricities have their centre, which verily is higher than any the world can see or conceive.

Faith dwelleth high in its own world and is above all earthly computations and sympathies.

And is known only to cognate spirits who, of

whatever age or clime, live with it in that invisible world.

## Persecution.

The progress of faith is to be gauged by its distance from the world.

The more it advances the fewer its companions, the smaller the circle of sympathy, and the more inveterate the world's antagonism.

Persecution is inevitable, mild at first but deadly in the end.

It is the price due to the world for living about it.

Hence some laugh at it, others hate it, some revile it, others denounce it.

The world cannot bear with it and at last puts away this living fire with dirt and death.

Ridicule is the seal wherewith the world marks its disapprobation of faith when it begins its mission.

As faith advances the reprobate world waxes wrathful and malicious, charges it with arrogance

and selfishness, and condemns it as a dangerous impostor.

If faith still persists in its obstinate work the world's tribunal passes severer sentence.

Deadly tortures are inflicted, and behold the martyr of faith glorified amid the blaze or on the cross !

Thus ridicule and contempt, anger and hatred, slander and reviling, coercion and torture, violence and death, these are the unavoidable recompense of them that seek the honour of living unto feedom and faith in this wicked world.

## Deification.

And yet some there are who through simplicity and ignorance run to the other extreme.

They kneel down and offer homage and worship to faith, for they think it to be of God.

They idolize it, attribute to it all manner of supernatural power, and adore it as God incarnate.

But the phenomena of persecution and deification are essentially one and betray the same ignorance.

Whether men crucify, or deify, they only confess the superhuman excellence of faith and their inability to comprehend it.

The one is negative, the other is positive testimony.

The one hateth away faith from the world and thereby acknowledgeth it is not earthly, the other exalteth it to the skies and confesseth it is divine.

## Resurrection.

The world cannot discern faith when it lies too near.

And it requireth due distance to lend clearness to the sight.

Hence it is that the prophet who is hated and condemned at home is honoured abroad, and while the land of his birth denies him, distant nations gratefully acknowledge him as their own.

Or the world needeth a glass to rectify its vision, and this death alone presents.

For through death faith is seen in truer colours and better understood.

Then the refraction through prejudice, envy, and ignorance is corrected.

Hence unto the prophet that leaveth the world loaded with indignities a shrine of posthumous glory is built.

And thus it is that faith shineth more in resurrection than in life.

25 January 1866. On the occasion of the thirty-sixth anniversary of the Brahma Samaj there was special Divine Service for the ladies of the Brahmica Samaj, conducted by Devendra Nath Tagore; and at the common Service Keshav preached a sermon on *Viveka O Vairagya* (conscience and renunciation) which was the last he preached in that Prayer Hall.

7 February. Mr. Shreedhar Swami Naidu of Madras who had been in Calcutta for the last eight months receiving missionary training was given a farewell on the eve of his departure to his own province. Keshav gave a very touching, edifying and impressive address on the occasion.

14February. On the initiative of Keshav, at the house of the Medical Missionary Dr.

Robson there was a gathering of Indian ladies (the fist of its kind) with an entertaining and instructive programme. There was a meeting of the general body of Brahmas, presided over by Keshav, in which the work of the previous year was reviewed, and resolutions and scheme of work for the current year adopted.

11 April.

Mr. R. Scott Moncrief, a Scottish merchant in Calcutta had, in a public lecture, vilified the character of the Natives of India, slandering even the gentler sex. The Indian public was greatly excited. With a view to allay the excitement as also to give expression to the deep feeling of reverence he cherished for the Prophet of Nazreth Keshav delivered a lecture in the Medical College Theatre on

5 May.

## JESUS CHRIST: EUROPE AND ASIA

As after a long and gloomy night, when creation lies prostrate in death-like sleep, the great luminary of the day rises in the east, clad in glittering gold, and travels towards the west, shedding warmth, light and life in all directions—so rose Christianity in the East, amidst the deep gloom of ignorance and corruption, and gloriously

careered westward, awaking slumbering nations to truth and righteonsness—God and salvation. The world was enveloped in almost impenetrable darkness when Jesus was born. Grim idolatry stalked over the length and breadth of the then known world, and prejudics and corruptions of a most revolting type followed in its train. Greece, Rome, and Egypt each had its pantheon of varied and countless deities, who ruled the mind of the age with iron sway. The principles of morality had also suffered a wreck amid the surges of extravagant luxuries and sensuality, and unbridled dissipation and debauchery prevailed on all sides. The light of wisdom and truth, which solitary greatness had now and then enkindled, had become well-nigh extinct. There was hardly any vestige of the beneficial influence produced by that code of pure ethics which venerable Socrates founded, and for which he laid down his very life; the same was also the fate of the sublime system of theophilosophy elaborated by the master-mind of Plato, and the unrivalled organum of ratiocination by which Aristotle laid the basis of true scientific knowledge. Only in corrupt and demoralising forms the perverted spirit of philosophy still lingered—such as the schools of Epicureanism and Scepti-

cism. Many openly professed and boldly practised the doctrine of eat, drink and be merry, and revelled in all manner of licentiousness; while many, on the other hand, laid the axe at the very root of morality. Judaism alone stood in solitary grandeur and prominent relief amid this scene of universal degradation, for it contained within itself the precious truths of Theism; but even that had come to be encumbered with empty rituals and ceremonies, and lay divided between the conceited and hypocritical Pharisees on the one hand, and the cold-hearted and sceptical Sadducees on the other. Thus the world presented almost one unbroken scene of midnight darkness on all sides. A light was needed. Humanity was groaning under a deadly malady and was on the verge of death; a remedy was urgently needed to save it. Jesus Christ was thus a necessity of the age: he appeared in the fulness of time. And, certainly, no great man ever rose in the world, but his birth was necessitated by surrounding circumstances, and his life was a necessary response to the demands of the age. The time was marvellously adapted for Christ's advent, not only because men were suffering from an intolerable malady, but also because there were wonderful facilities for the

administration of a remedy. All the nations of the then civilized world formed one vast empire, and were cemented together by common subjection to the central ruling power of Rome. Secondly, the Greek language was widely diffused among the educated classes of all these nations, and formed a ready and convenient medium for the dissemniation of new thoughts and ideas to the remotest countries. And, lastly, the Jews among whom the truth was first to be preached, were scattered over all the principal stations in the empire, so as to form a wide-spread foundation for the new religious movement.

Under such circumstances Jesus Christ was born. I shall not enter into the details of his life and ministry, as my present business is simply with the influence which he exercised on the world. It cannot be denied that it was solely for his thorough devotion to the cause of truth, and the interests of suffering humanity, that he patiently endured all the privations and hardships which came in his way, and met that fierce storm of persecution which his infuriated antagonists poured on his devoted head. He laid down his life that God might be glorified. I have always regarded the cross as a beautiful emblem of self-sacrifice

unto the glory of God. Such honourable and disinterested self-sacrifice has produced wonderful results. It has moulded the civilization of modern Europe, and it underlies the many civilizing and philanthropic agencies of the present day. He has exercised such living and lasting influence on the world, not by the physical miracles which popular theology has ascribed to him, but the greater miracle of the truth which he preached.

It cannot be said that we in India have nothing to do with Christ or Christianity. While, through missionary agency, our country has been connected with the enlightened nations of the West, politically, an All-wise and All-merciful Providence has entrusted its interests to the hands of a Christian sovereign. In this significant event worldly men can see nothing but an ordinary, political phenomenon, but those of you who can discern the finger of Providence in individual and national history will doubtless see here His wise and merciful interposition. Here, then, we stand, in the wise arrangements of Providence, Europeans and Natives, bound together by identity of political interests, and yielding common subjection to her Gracious Majesty; and certainly God requires of us that we should so

adjust our mutual relations, and fulfil our respective missions, that we may benefit each other, and harmoniously co-operate for the furtherance of our common objects.

But does harmony actually prevail among us ? United by political ties, are we morally united ? Does brotherly love subsist between the conquering and conquered races? Do the former recognise Jesus as their guide and master in their dealings with the latter, and exercise on them the influence of true Christian life ? Are the Europeans and the Indians so far influenced by the love of God and man which Jesus Christ preached, as to combine harmoniously to promote their mutual welfare and fulfil the purposes of Providence ? Alas ! instead of mutual good feeling and brotherly intercourse, we find the bitterest rancour and hatred, and ceaseless exchange of reviling, vituperation, and slander. As one deeply interested in the social and spiritual welfare of my country, I cannot but feel grieved to see that, owing to justifiable conduct on both sides, there is a most injurious isolation between us and that nation with whose aid we are to rise in the scale of nations, and from whom we have to learn the inestimable riches of Christ's sublime morality.

Among the European community in India there is a class who not only hate the Natives with their whole heart, but seem to take a pleasure in doing so. Native ideas and tastes, Native customs and manners, seem to them odious and contemptible; while Native character is considered to represent the lowest type of lying and wickedness. In their eyes the Native is a man who is inherently a liar, and the nation is a nation of liars. They liken a Native to a fox—wily, fraudulent, and mean—full of sinister motives, deceit and cunning. He is born and bred a fox, and is destined to live and die a fox! As a fox, therefore, a Native should always be distrusted, and treated with contempt and hatred. Many natives, on the other hand, liken the European to a *wolf*—vindictive, wrathful, ferocious, and bloodthirsty. He is born and bred a wolf, and is destined to live and die a wolf. Meekness, forbearance, and mercy are unknown to him. The least provacation ruffles his temper, kindles his wrath, and makes him rush blindly to vengeance. Insult he cannot bear; he cannot forgive his enemies. Hot-headed and ferocious, he takes delight in exercising violence, and often he does so without any plea or reason whatsoever. As a wolf, therefore he is to be dreaded and shunned.

There is some truth in these caricatures. The Native heart is exceedingly narrow and selfish. There is too much of exclusiveness about a Native, which limits his thoughts and feelings within a small compass. I will not deny that perjury and forgery, lying and dishonesty prevail to an alarming extent in our country; but I cannot believe they are traits of our national charcter. Selfishness is a characteristic of onr nation, and into this many of our national defects may resolve themselves. But this selfishness may be accounted for by the circumstances under which we live. We are a subject race, and have been so for centuries. We have too long been under foreign sway to feel anything like independence in our hearts. Socially and religiously we are little better than slaves. From infancy up we have been trained to believe that we are Hindus only so far as we offer slavish obedience to the authority of the Shasters and the priests, and that any amount of disobedience would be so much want of our nationality. Then, again, we are physically cribbed and confined. Travelling is religiously interdicted. A Native lives and moves in his little house, and knows no world beyond the boundaries of his own country. His notions of men and things must needs be narrow, and his

heart contracted. Even in his patriotism and benevolence there is too often a cast of narrow selfishness. On reversing the picture, we fiind the Hindoo has certain excellences in which his Europeon brother is rather deficient. The Hindoo is mild and meek. He is intensely fond of peace. His patience and cool self-possession are remarkable. He is slow to anger and not easily provoked. He is conciliating and forgiving, and would do all he can to enjoy the enviable felicity of having no enemy on earth.

On the other hand, the European is full of energy and activity, and dislikes a quiet, smooth life. He seems to love the hurricane and boisterous sea. He rejoices in the danger which brings his energies into full play. He seeks honour and glory in the free and full use of his indomitable power, and nothing short of the discomfiture of his enemies will satisfy him. The European nature is rough, stern, impulsive, and fiery; it thinks meekness to be cowardice; it rejoices and glories in violence and vengeance. How often do such qualities, overstepping all legitimate bounds, and defying all higher impulses, become frightful sources of mischief! And, alas! how sadly manifest is this in India! Many a European

adventurer in this country seems to believe that he has a right to trample upon every unfortunate nigger with whom he comes in contact. What glory is there in abusing and maltreating a poor Native ? Is this military prowess, or is it Christian zeal ? I cherish great respect for the Europeans, not for any secular considerations, but for the sake of Christ, whom they profess to follow, and whom, I believe, it is their mission to make known to us in words as well as deeds. I regard every European settler in India as a missionary of Christ, and I have a right to demand that he should always remember and act up to his high responsibilities. But alas ! owing to the reckless conduct of a number of pseudo-Christians, Christianity has failed to produce any wholesome moral influence on my countrymen. Behold Christ crucified in the lives of those who profess to be his followers !

Here, in this hall and elsewhere the Native character has been most severely denounced and and vilified, and the foulest aspersions cast upon it with unjustifiable partiality. From such one-sided and sweeping condemnation it is my duty to vindicate our national character. If there are foxes among the Natives, there are wolves among the

Europeans ; if the former are narrow-minded and selfish, the latter are rough and implacable ; if the former are led by selfishness to commit forgery the latter are driven by anger to commit murder ; if the former have no integrity, the latter have no mercy ; if the former have no regard for truth, neither have the latter—if truth be taken in its highest sense, even as it is in the Holy God. We have on the one side a perverted Europeanism, and on the other a perverted Indianism, but there are acknowledged excellences on both sides. I hope, therefore, that European and Native communities will understand aright their respective defects and shortcomings, and the good qualities of each other, that they may with humility and mutual respect cultivate fellowship with, and do good to, each other. Extend, then, O ye Europeans in India ! the right hand of fellowship, to which we are fairly entitled. If, however, our Christian friends persist in traducing our nationality and national character, and in distrusting and hating Orientalism, let me assure them that I do not in the least feel dishonoured by such imputations. On the contrary I rejoice, yea, I am proud, that I am an Asiatic. And was not Jesus Christ an Asiatic ? Yes, and his disciples were Asiatics, and all the agencies primarily employed

for the propagation of the Gospel were Asiatic. In fact, Christianity was founded and developed by Asiatics and in Asia. When I reflect on this, my love for Jesus becomes a hundrehfold intensified; I feel him nearer my heart, deeper in my national sympathies. Why should I then feel ashamed to acknowledge that nationality which he acknowledged. Shall I not rather say he is more congenial and akin to my Oriental nature, more agreeable to my Oriental habits of thought and feeling? And is it not true that an Asiatic can read the imageries and allegories of the Gospel, and its descriptions of natural sceneries, of customs and manners, with greater interest, and a fuller perception of their force and beauty, than Europeans? In Christ we see not only the exaltedness of humanity but also the grandeur of which Asiatic nature is susceptible. To us, Asiatics, therefore, Christ is doubly interesting, and his religion is entitled to our peculiar regard as an altogether Oriental affair. The more this great fact is pondered, the less I hope will be the antipathy and hatred of European Christians against Oriental nationalities, and the greater the interest of the Asiatics in the teachings of Christ. And thus in Christ, Europe and Asia, the East and the West, may learn to find harmony and unity.

I must therefore protest against that denationalization which is so general among Native converts to Christianity. With the religion of their heathen forefathers, they generally abandon the manners and customs of their country, and with Christianity they embrace the usages of Europeans; even in dress and diet they assume an affected air of outlandishness, which estranges them from their own countrymen. I sincerely beseech them not to confound the spirit of Christianity with the fashions of Western civilization. May they aspire to the glory of following the example of their great master who, though he inculcated catholic truth for all mankind, was not ashamed to live and die a simple and poor Asiatic.

In contrasting the national character of the European and Native races, I have been guided by no local or arbitrary criterin, but by that high and universally acknowleaged standard of ethics which is above the accidents of time and place, and is applicable to all men and nations alike. I have freely pronounced the imperfections of the two races, so far as I have found them to fall short of the requirements of God's law. And certainly it is our interest and duty, in

estimating our own or our neighbour's character, to refer, not to human opinion, but to the absolute standard of perfection as it is in God. I would ask you to appeal to your own consciences, that you may see and confess how far you stand convicted before the throne of the Holy God as *men*, however much you may find reason to gratify your national pride as Europeans and Asiatics. I would refer you to the sublime maxims of Christs' morality. Christ spake not as worldly men speak, in the accomodating spirit of prudence: he preached absolute religion. Let it not be supposed that I allude to any special form of Christian ethics as it is understood and accepted by particular denominations of the Christian Church. I have not derived my conceptions of Christ or his ethics from the dogmatic theology or the actual life of any class of his followers. I do not identify him with any Christian sect. I have gone direct to the Bible to ascertain the genuine doctrines of morality inculcated by Christ; and it is my firm conviction that his teachings find a response in the universal consciousness of humanity, and are no more European than Asiatic, and that in his ethics "there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, bond or free."

The two fundamental doctrines of Gospel which stand out prominently above all others, are, in my opinion, the doctrines of forgiveness and self-sacrifice; and it is in these we perceive the moral greatness of Christ. These Golden maxims how beautifully he preached, how nobly he lived! Verily, when we read his life, his meekness, like the soft moon, ravishes the heart and bathes it in a flood of serene light; but when we come to the grand consummation of his career, his death on the cross, behold he shines as the powerful sun in its meridian splendour!

Christ tells us to forgive our enemies, yea, to bless them that curse us, and pray for them that despitefully use us; he tells us, when one smites the right cheek, to turn the left towards him. Who can adequately conceive this transcendent charity? The most impressive form in which it practically manifests itself is in that sweet and tender prayer which the crucified Jesus uttered in the midst of deep agony—"Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do". What a sublime protest this is against those unnatural passions of resentment and vengeance which we are so apt to indulge! Often have I advised my Native friends to forget and forgive the wrongs

inflicted upon them by cruel and insolent Europeans, instead of seeking to gratify their anger. If we are maltreated by others, we have no right to maltreat them in return. To the European community, the doctrine of Christian charity applies with even greater force. As Christians, they ought to be baptized into true Christian meekness; their rough nature will be thereby humanized, and their proneness to indulge in violence and ferocity will be effectually curbed.

The other leading doctrine of Gospel morality I have alluded to is self-sacrifice. The precepts which enjoin this virtue are so numerous and emphatic and prominent in the Gospel that one feels no difficulty whatever in recognising it as the one great truth which threads the whole narrative of Christ's life and ministry. Nothing does he so constantly and consistently demand of his disciples as the sacrifice of worldly interests. He will have no compromise between God and the world.

Thorough resignation to the will of God, without any fear of consequences or solicitude for food and raiment, constitutes the chief feature of Christ's teachings. His death on the cross affords the highest illustration of self-sacrifice.

In obedience to the will of his Father, he laid down his life, and said—Thy will be done, O God! Fellow-countrymen, it is your duty to follow these precepts, and imitate this example of self-sacrifice in the cause of truth. By doing so, you will not only remove the great stigma of unprincipled selfishness which attaches to your national character, and learn to regulate your life by high moral principles, but you will be enabled to promote effectually the true welfare of your country in the peculiarly momentous crisis in which it is at present placed. Our selfishness has been our country's ruin. Nothing short of total self-abnegation will save our country. I assure you, brethren, nothing short of self-sacrifice, of which Christ has furnished so bright an example, will regenerate India. We must love God with our whole heart; we must live and die for truth. Let no sordid selfishness any longer make us indifferent to the deplorable condition of our fatherland; let us rise and bring self a voluntary victim before the throne of God, and dedicate ourselves wholly to His service and our country's welfare. Enough has been the degradation of India; her sufferings are brimful. Already, through divine grace, a transition has commenced, and the dawn of reformation is visible on all sides.

But such transition is only the precursor of a mighty revolution through which India is destined to pass, and which will come with its tremendous trials in the fullness of time. Prepare yourselves for the trials which await you. Prepare yourselves, I say, for the time is coming when you shall be called to undergo heavy self-denials, and encounter struggles of no ordinary kind. And the better to stimulate you to a life of self-denial, I hold up to you the cross on which Jesus died. May his examples so influence you, that you may be prepared to offer even your blood, if need be, for the regeneration of your country. Let my European brethren do all they can to establish and consolidate the moral kinghom of Christ in India. Let them preach from their pulpits, and exhibit in their daily life the great principles of charity and self-sacrifice. And on the basis of these principles, may brotherly intercourse and co-operation be established between them and my countrymen. May England and India, Europe and Asia, be indissolubly united in charity and love, and self-denying devotion to truth !

This lecture drew the attention of high Government officials upon Keshav, and Lord Lawence, the Governor-General of India, expressed

his desire to form Keshav's acquaintance. On the other hand Keshav's views and tendencies were misrepreted; and many Christians believed that he would soon be converted to their religion. The great sensation caused by the lecture and the important consequences to the Brahma

28 September. Samaj which it involved, led Keshav to deliver, in the Town Hall of Calcutta his well-known discourse on—

## GREAT MEN.

The age in which we live has its advantages as well as its disadvantages. In these days of civilization and enlightenment, of industry and enterprize, of trade and manufacture, of steam and electricity, of scientific discoveries and inventions, there are on all sides cheering indications of material improvement and prosperity. But the age does not seem to be very favourable to the spiritual interests of man. In the midst of all this pomp and splendour of material prosperity, ill fares the spirit. While the senses enjoy an endless variety of physical comforts, the soul droops and pines in an uncongenial atmosphere. Modern civilization is eminently and essentially materialistic, All departments of thought and

speculation are more or less of this character. The politics of the age is Benthamism, its ethics Utilitarianism, its religion Rationalism, its philosophy Positivism, All seems dull, mechanical, unspiritual, and lifeless. In the discharge of moral and religious duties especially, and in all concerns affecting the interests of the soul, men follow not the high and immutable principles of conscience, but the low and convenient standard of conventionalism. All the nobler instincts and aspirations are smothered by the ignoble worship of custom and tradition. The orthodox fondly look through the vista of by-gone ages to a romantic past, peopled with saints and prophets and angels of God, adorned with all that is fairest and goodliest and holiest, and illumined by God's direct revelations; and they fancy that by believing in that they will be saved. Those on the other hand, who are beyond the pale of orthodoxy, are giving themselves up to the wild vagaries of free-thinking and scepticism, though outwardly, for politic reasons, they conform as strictly to forms and symbols as the orthodox. Thus, as regards both those who are within and those who are outside the orthodox Church there is underneath apparent conformity a striking absence of spiritual faith—that faith which, is "the evidence

of things not seen, the substance of things hoped for."

From the bigotry and dogmatism of traditional creeds to the cold abstraction of rationalism, the entire religious life of the nineteenth century betrays lamentable want of spiritual insight, and of that direct inspiration which alone can give us light unto salvation. From such tendencies, which characterise the civilization of the present age, India is not altogether free. Decrepit with age as she is in relation to her ancient greatness, and quite in her infancy in relation to modern civilization, she has with peculiar readiness caught this widespread contagion. Politically and intellectually, England is our master. We have been brought up in the school of English thought, and have been inoculated with Western ideas and sentiments. Hence it is that we see in India a dim reflection of all that is going on at present in civilized Europe. Utilitarian views have already spread far and wide among the educated classes, and Positivism counts its followers by hundreds. Few care about the sacred interests of the soul; and those who do, rest satisfied with a few vague rationalistic dogmas. It is certaily the duty of all interested in the welfare

of India to endeavour to check, in due season these sceptical tendencies of the age, and to infix in the minds of the rising generation, such positive ideas of the higher truths of religion as may enable them to attain the blessings of salvation. The people of India must be roused from their lethargy and apathy and saved from the dangers of smooth but treacherous materialism. This life of spiritual stagnation that we see around us is woeful; this spreading infection of sceptical fancies is appalling. The ensalved spirit of the nation must rise and bestir itself freely to the holy activities of the higher life. That question is or should be as solemn and pressing with us in India now as it ever was elsewhere—"What shall I do to be saved?" And for a proper and practical solution of this question, we must, with sincere and humble hearts, rely on God, and pray without ceasing that He may reveal Himself to us, and purify and regenerate us by the direct action of His holy spirit. For in order that we may be sanctified and saved, we must hold direct and personal communion with God, each for himself, and so feel and establish our relations with Him, that our hearts may be for ever open to His living and holy inspiration. And as God communicates His spirit to us in certain mysterious ways, a proper

comprehension of the secret of such communication is obviously of great importance to our salvation. Thousands, we know, have, in all ages, searched for truth and God in the dry wells of ancient traditions and outward symbols, to satisfy their spiritual thirst; but it was not till they discovered and drank of the deep fountain of divine revelation that they felt truly blessed with the pure water of saving truth. It is, therefore, necessary to inquire how God reveals Himself to man.

The first manifestation of God is in nature, and it is from this that the earliest religious impressions of men and nations have been derived. Man, in the simplicity of his uneducated mind "traces nature up to nature's God."

The universe exhibits on all sides innumerable marks of design and beauty, of adaptation and method. Each object in nature reminds us of its maker, and draws the heart in spontaneous reverence to His infinite Majesty. All that is grand and beautiful in the world below, and the heavens above, "declare the glory of God and show His handiwork," and inspire devotional feelings in the soul towards Him who made them. Verily, there are "tongues in trees, books in

running brooks, sermons in stones, and good in every thing." The world cannot exist for one moment without God. He is its life and power In Him we "live and move and have our being." It is not true, as some would have it, that God created the world, invested each object and being with certain powers, and left them to work indepenently, according to certain fixed laws. Law simply denotes mode of action, and can have no agency; while the secondary powers inherent in objects are dependent upon the primary power of the Almighty. God the Creator should not be conceived apart from God the Preserver. We perceive His goodness in the countless and varied bounties which He showers on us. It is He who supplies our daily wants; and even before we came into the world He made ample provisions necessary for our sustenance and well-being. He taketh care of each one of us, and is the giver of every good that we enjoy. This is a great fact, and cannot be ignored—God's providence. There are some who affect to dispose of it as a general providence, the effect of God's general administration of the world on each irdividual life. Men with simple and natural hearts will, however, believe that the food they eat and the pleasures they enjoy are all the gifts of Providence—the

necessary effects of a general economy, it is true, but not less the generous gifts of special kindness to each individual recipient of the same. Between general and special providence there is no difference in fact. It is God's goodness viewed from different standpoints that makes the distinction. The Creator of the universe is the Father of each individual man. All his dispensations are general as regards the world at large, but they are special so far as they fall within the bounds of our individual life, and are respectively partaken by us. The same sun that gives light and heat to millions of men may be viewed either as a part of the general economy of the world conducive to general prosperity, or it may be gratefully looked upon by each individual man as manifesting God's mercy towards him. Behold the Supreme Creator and Ruler of the universe—infinite in wisdom, power, and goodness—immanent in matter, upholding it, and quickening all its movements, and mercifully dispensing joy and blessings to all His children. Such is the revelation of nature.

But is God manifest only in matter? No. There is another revelation; there is *God in History*. He who created and upholds this vast

universe also governs the destinies and affairs of nations. The same hand which we trace in the lily and the rose, in rivers and mountains, in the movements of the planets and the surges af the sea, regulates the economy of human society, and works, unseen, amid its mighty revolutions, its striking vicissitudes, and its progressive movements. History is not what superficial readers take it to be, a barren record of meaningless facts—a dry chronicle of past events, whose evanescent interest vanished with the age when they occurred. It is a most sublime revelation of God, and is full of religious significance. It is a vast sermon on God's providence, with copious and varied illustrations. But in what manner does God manifest Himself in history? Through great men. For what is history but the record of the achievements of those extraordinary personages who appear from time to time and lead mankind? The history of the world, says Carlyle, is the biography of great men. The interest of nations and epochs centres in them. It is with the masses of mankind as with armies; they act by their leaders, themselves unknown and unnoticed. In the vast history of the world we miss the names of ordinary men, whom Victor Cousin justly calls "anonymous beings of the

human species"; only the names of great men strike the eye, and rivet our interest and sympathy. Such men take the lead in all the great movements of the world: the multitudes always follow. It is through these great men, these leaders of mankind, that God reveals Himself to us in history; in short, they constitute what we mean by "God in histoty."

But who are they, some may ask, that we should be so anxions about them? Whatever importance they may posses as leading historic characters, are they of any religious importance to us? Yes, they are of the deepest interest and importance to our souls. Nations rise and fall, revolutions and wars make a wreck of society, but true greatness always lives—a standing miracle and an abiding revelation—to speak unto endless generations, and unto all nations of the earth, of the inscrutable riches of God's wisdom, power and goodness.

Great men are sent by God into the world to benefit mankind. They are His apostles and missionaries, who bring to us glad tidings from heaven; and in order that they may effectualy accomplish their errand, they are endowed by Him with requisite power and talents. They are

not made great by culture or experience: they are born great. It is God's light that makes them shine, and enables them to illumine the world. It is true they are men; but who will deny that they are above ordinary humanity? Though human, they are divine. This is the striking peculiarity of all great men. It is easy to distinguish a great man, but it is difficult to comprehend him. A deep mystery hangs over the root of his life: the essence of his being is an inexplicable riddle. That some nations have carried their reverence for prophets so far as to deify them, and worship them as God, or rather God in human shape, does not in the least appear to me surprising or unaccountable, however guilty they may be of man-worship. For if a prophet is not God, is he a mere man? I look upon a prophet as a divine incarnation; in this sense, that he is the spirit of God manifest in human flesh. True incarnation is not, as popular theology defines it, the absolute perfection of the divine nature embodied in mortal form; it is not the God of the universe putting on a human body—the infinite becoming finite in space and time, in intelligence and power. It simply means God manifest in humanity;—not God made man, but God *in* man.

Man, however great he may be, however excellent and divine his character, is human, and, as such, liable to all the imperfections and infirmities of man, and the thousand evils which flesh is heir to. When, therefore, he is honoured above others as God's incarnation, we are to understand his superiority to be one of degree, not of kind. For it must be admitted that every man is, in some measure, an incarnation of the divine sprit. "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the spirit of God dwelleth in you?" If, then, incarnation means the spirit of God manifest in human flesh, certainly every man is an incarnation. And great men are pre-eminently so, for they exhibit a larger measure of the divine spirit.

Thus great men are superhuman, and, I may add, supernatural; but there is nothing miraculous about them, in the popular sense of that word—there is no diviation from the established laws of nature. Great men, like comets, move in eccentric orbits. As the course of comets seems irregular when compared with the movements of planets, so does the career of great men when compared with that of ordinary men. And yet comets have orbits of their own, which are perfect and regular

in themselves. Similarly, a prophet, however uncommon and eccentric and different from ordinary men, is guided by the same unalterable law as they.

Great men appear when they are needed. In the history of nations there occur now and then crises of a very serious character, when the advancing tide of progress shakes the very foundations of society; at such times certain great minds appear, being called forth by the peculiar necessities of the age, who avert impending perils, meet all existing wants, and remodel society on an improved basis. They mark the transition state of society, the turning point in the career of nations. In the established economy of Providence they are special dispensations, to meet the special wants of humanity. The spirit of the age can no longer brook the tyranny of the past, and shows restlessness and impatience and an earnest struggle for enfranchisement. Amid all this struggle and turmoil, the travail of an age seeking to disburden itself, the prophet is born. A prophet is said to regenerate his people; he infuses new life into them. In him the old generation dies, and a new generation is born. Himself the child of the past, he becomes in his

turn the progenitor of an altogether new race of men.

Great men possess a representative character. They are representative in a double sense:—(1) They represent their country and age; (2) They represent specific ideas. The administration of the affairs of human society is actually, though not apparently, carried on by a few leading minds; it is the aristocracy of great men that governs the world. But this aristocrrcy is representative, not arbitary or despotic. Great men rule the masses, not by reason of their superior talents and energies, but because they faithfully represent the interests of those whom they govern. A prophet is, in fact, the highest embodiment of the spirit of his country and time—the leading type of contemporaneons nationality. In him the people recognise their truest representative, and they spontaneously and trustfully throw themselves on his guidance. He rules because he serves; his people follow and obey him, for he is among them as one that serveth. Their loyalty is not the cringing servile allegience of the vassal, but the grateful homage of independent souls in recognition of the services rendered by their representative leader. The people honour

themselves by honouring their prophet; and they glorify him only so far as he is true to them.

Great men represent particular ideas. Every great man comes into the world with a certain great idea fixed in his mind, which it is his mission to realise and stamp on his age. This idea is not accidental, but the essence of his being. It is divinely implanted in his mind. It is the governing principle of all his thoughts, wishes, and aspirations; the primary motive of all his movements. It is this idea that makes a great man a necessity of his age, as it shows him forth as the reformer in whom all the grievances of the nation will find redress. His life is thus a life of continued struggle, which ceases only with his life, when his subjective idea is converted into objective reality.

From what I have already said, certain essential characteristics peculiar to greatness may be infferred. The first is the absence of selfishness. Great men do not live on their own account, they live for others. Constituted for public good, they would pine and languish away if confined in the suffocating atmosphere of a selfish existence.

Secondly, their sincerity. They are full of earnestness. They neither deceive themselves by

a mere fancy, nor do they impose upon others by hypocrisy. Devoid of theatricality and sentimentalism, they pursue their vocation in sober seriousness.

Thirdly, the originality of their wisdom. Great men do not borrow their thoughts and ideas from others; they do not blindly follow the example of any earthly guide. In the depth of their minds lies the fountain of pure wisdom, from which they unceasingly draw fresh suplies of original truths. It is the wisdom of faith. They learn more by insight than by observation, experiment or reasoning. A prophet-reformer is always a man of genius, an inspired man, and when he teaches, the world is astonished at his wisdom, and says—Never man spake so before.

Lastly, their invincible power. All great men are heroes. They are armed with uncommon firmness and derermination, inflexible force of character, and a strong will, that never yields and is above discomfiture.

But this power is not his own; it is God's power that upholds him in his struggles and trials. He is then only successful when he fights in God's strength, not his own.

Is it not our duty, I ask, to render unto prophets and greatmen the humble tribute of our gratitude and esteem ? The immense service they render to mankind, and the noble characteristics which distingwish them—their deep wisdom and invincible power, their rigid self-denial and fervent devotion, challenge the spontaneous gratitude and esteem of men.

Let not our homage, however, be exclusively confined to any one of them, and withheld from the rest. We must honour all of them, unbiassed by local influences, party feeling. or sectarian bigotry. It is the want of this catholic spirit that has filled the religious world with jealousies, hatred, and sanguinary strife. Struck with amazement at the superhuman character of their prophet, men have, in the blind zeal of extreme devotion, exalted him to divinity, and indentified him with Godhead, and while adoring their own prophet as the God of salvation, they have condemned all other prophets as false prophets, who lead their followers to perdition. It is indeed painful to contemplate the two-fold evil of such sectarian bigotry. This idolatrous bending of the knee before man is an insult to Heaven. On the other hand, equally mischievous, if not

equally sacrilegious, is the rancour with which every prophet is hated and cursed by the followers of another prophet. This is making God the God of a clan, a country, and an epoch, instead of, as He is, the God of mankind, of all space and of all time. All true believers acknowledge the Supreme Creator of the universe as the sole object of adoration and worship; and as He is eternal and omnipresent, and His providence universal, they treat with reverence and gratitude the various dispensations of His grace made at different times, and in different countries, for the benefit of mankind. Each prophet came into the world as a messenger of God, bearing a distinct message of glad tidings which he contributed to the cause of religious enlightenment and progress. We must then freely honour all of them, and gratefully accept from each what he has to deliver, instead of binding ourselves as slaves to any particular person as the only chosen prophet of God. Let sectarianism perish, then. Let denominational and geographical boundaries be for ever forgotten, and let all nations unite in celebrating a universal festival in honour of all prophets, regarding them as the Elder Brothers of the human race. Thus hostile churches, and the dismembered races of mankind, shall be knit

together in one family in the bonds of universal faith in the common Father, and universal gratitude and esteem towards their elder brothers, the prophets.

The last and highest mode of revelation remains to be described. I have spoken of God in Nature, and then of God in History; but both these forms of divine manifestation are external. The one to which I am about to draw your attention is internal and comes home to our hearts, viz, God in the Soul. The striking evidences of the Great Creator's power, wisdom and goodness, which are stamped on the whole face of animate and inanimate creation, do indeed exalt the believer's heart to Him; but far greater is the influence of the lives of great men, which, coming with all the moral force of example, animates and bestirs us to a life of wisdom, piety, and righteousness. Nothing, however, can bear comparison with the almighty power of Inspiration—the direct breathing-in of God's spirit—which infuses an altogether new life into the soul and exalts it above all that is earthly and impure. It is the more powerful, being God's direct and immediate action on the human soul, while the revelation made through physical nature and biography is indirect and mediate.

In these latter modes of divine revelation truth is received at second hand; God is seen as reflected in a mirror, and often, alas! refracted through its imperfections. But in inspiration the Supreme Soul is presented to us in our own finite souls, and His saving light falls directly upon the eye of faith. The highest revelation, then, is inspiration, where spirit communes with spirit, face to face, without any mediation whatsoever. Divine life can only be secured by divine grace—it comes pouring into the soul from Him who is its source. This is inspiration; it is the direct action of the Holy Spirit.

Behold the marvellous effects of divine inspiration! It thrills and enlivens the whole spiritual being of man with a sort of holy excitement and frenzy, and carries him by the hair of the head into the very presence of God, and there breathes into him new life. It revolutionalizes the very foundations of the old carnal life, and effects a radical reform in the vital mainspring of man's motives, wishes, words, and deeds; it marks a turning-point in his history. It kills the "old man" and kindles his ashes into an altogether new creature. This is true spiritual Baptism—baptism, not with water, but with fire. One who

has realised God in his own soul, and has been inspired with enthusiastic love and fidelity towards Him, and who loves only His company and His service, lives in heaven though on earth. Such enthusiastic souls, men born again through fire-baptism, live in the kingdom of God, and enjoy, here and hereafter, the supreme felicity of living and loving communion with Him in the inner temple of the heart.

**11 November.** In response to a requisition from a large number of Brahmas, a meeting was held, its object being stated by Keshav thus:—"Our present object is simply to organise and incorporate the Brahma community, to establish such enduring bonds of sympathy and union among the several members of our community as are essential to their individual and common welfare, to the consolidation and growth of our Church, and to the effectual propagation of Brahma Dharma (Theism)" By the first resolution the Brahma Samaj of India was established. The last resolution presented

# AN ADDRESS

*(Translated from the Bengali by P. C. Mozoomdar.)*

To the venerable Maharshi Devendra Nath Tagore, Pradhan Acharya of the Calcutta Brahmo Samaj.

FATHER.

When the patriotic, virtuous, geat-souled Raja Ram Mohun Roy established a public place for the holy worship of God in Bengal, the true welfare of the country began. Roused from the sleep of ignorance for ages Bengal received a new life, and, freed from superstitions, began to walk independently in the path of progres. But that great man being within a short time removed from this world, the light of Divine worship kindled by him came very nearly to be extinct. At this crisis God raisd you, and placed in your hands, the charge of the spiritual advancement of the country. The unselfish and untiring zeal with which you have borne this responsibility for the last thirty years, and the endless good you have done, binds us to you in the debt of everlasting gratitude. To revive the declining worship of God according to Vedantic principles, as practised before, you founded the society known as the Tatwabodhini Sava in Shakabda 1761 ( 1839 A. D. ), where many educated young men forsook their prejudices through religious discussions, and were able to purify their hearts by the worship of God. This society made rapid progress, and within a short time was

filled by a numerous membership. In order that the results of your religious investigations might spread still more widely you founded in Shaka 1765 (1863) the celebrated Tatwabodhini Patrica. This journal has truly reformed and adorned the Bengali language, and disseminated the truths of spiritual and secular learning in various places of Bengal and the N.-W. Provinces. Thus the Tatwabodhini Sava, and the Brahmo Somaj founded by Raja Ram Mohun Roy, helping each other, contributed to the increse of worshippers, of God. In order to unite them in the bonds of a common faith in due time, you introduced the form of initiation Brahmo Dharma in 1843. By this means you established the worshippers on the ground of formal belief, and organised them into a sect of Vedantic Theism. Thus the Brahmo Somaj, developed into its full shape, began to grow, and branch Samajes were founded in different places. But in the advancement of true religion, errors cannot last for a long time. Therefore the dangerous doctrine of the infallibility of the Vedas that underlay these developments, as soon as it was exposed in the light of knowledge, you tried to discard in obedience to conscience, by the commandment of God, and for the good of the Brahmo brotherhood. By churning the ocean of the Hindu shastras you had obtained the nectar of truth, but when afterwards you found poison in that nectar, you set yourself to distinguish the two, and at last published under the name of Brahma Dharma a compilation of the truths of the Hindu scriptures in 1850. In consequence the form of initia-

tion in the Brahmo Somaj was also modified. By deep contemplation you elaborated a number of fundamental and indisputable principles of Theism, and upon these you established the Brahmo community. Thus organizing the Brahmo Somaj, for a few years you retired to the Himalyan mountains. Stopping there for two years, your mind and heart were elevated by contemplation, prayer, study, and you returned to Calcutta to devote yourself with redoubled zeal to the progress of the Somaj which you had reformed before. You established the Brahmo School, where week after week you dispensed the pure saving knowledge of Theism to convert unto God the hearts of young men, and your precepts collected in the form of a book still help hundreds to understand the faith and doctrines of the Brahmo Somaj. But even then the true nobleness of your soul was not discovered. When as Pradhan Acharya of the Calcutta Bramo Somaj you began to discourse from the holy pulpit on the glorious truths of Brahma Dharma, then indeed your deep and lofty sentiments became fully known to the world, and specially drew the hearts of men towards God. How often amidst the sins and sorrows of the world we were refreshed by the sweet streams of wisdom that flowed from your heart; how often in the Brahmo Somaj your rousing precepts have revived our dull dead spirits, and in the realms of the spirit you discovered for us, we were cheered by the beauty and profoundness of truth, for the time forgetting the world. The heavenly and matchless Bakhwans (sermons) have now been published in book-form. The

benefit we derived from hearing them, we believe others also will derive who read them, and that this invaluable book will be duly honoured in different lands. Thus have you generally served the Brahmo community after the ideals of your own heart, but you have specially benefited a few among us whom you have treated as affectionately as your own children. These have felt the deep nobleness of your character, and elevated by your precept, example, and holy companionship, reverence you as their father, and regard you as their true friend and help in the path of spiritual progress. They will for all time be bound to you by the debt of gratitude. That the religion of the Brahmo Somaj is the religion of love, and that it is above mere abstract rationalism and empty reform, we have learnt from you, and by your influence and teaching perceived the spiritual holiness and joy of Brahmoism.

Benefited extremely in these various ways, we present you to-day this address as the tribute of the reverence and gratitude of our hearts. It is not our object to speak vain words of praise. Only stimulated by the sense of duty and heartfelt thankfulness we venture to take his step. Do us the great favour to accept this unworthy testimony. May the great God dispense unalloyed joy to your heart, may all your holy intentions be fulfilled, and may prosperity attend you in this life, as well as in the next.

*Calcutta, Nov. 1866.* KESHUB CHUNDER SEN,
AND OTHERS.